THURSDAY
April 4, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
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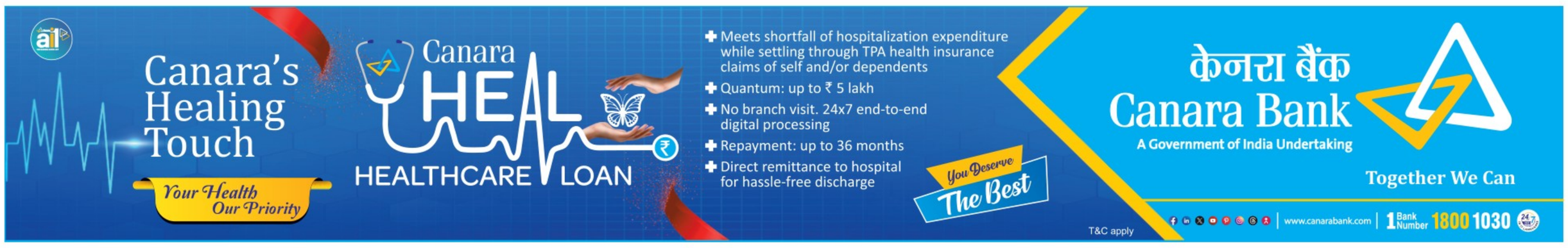
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BATTLE READY

Rahul files nomination from Wayanad seat

SOUTH » PAGE 7

REACTOR BLAST

Four killed in drug unit explosion in Telangana

SOUTH » PAGE 7

ALLIANCES AT WORK

A three-cornered contest in Tamil Nadu

ELECTIONS » PAGE 11

SC to list before polls pleas to verify count in all EVMs

A series of petitions have sought a complete count of VVPAT slips as opposed to the current practice of verification of votes in only a few EVMs in each Assembly segment through the slips

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to list ahead of the Lok Sabha election a series of petitions seeking a directive to the Election Commission to mandatorily cross-verify the vote count in all electronic voting machines (EVMs) by counting all voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) slips.

The current practice is verification of votes cast in only five polling stations of each Assembly constituency through the slips.

Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who heads the Bench, assured senior advocates Kapil Sibal, advocate Prashant Bhushan, senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, and advocate Neha Rathi, all appearing for various petitioners, including the Association for Democratic Reforms, that the case would be listed the week after next.

The Lok Sabha election will begin on April 19.

In an oral mentioning, the lawyers urged the court to hear the case before the election, possibly even next week. "We may not be able to hear next week. That is why we said the week after next," Justice Khanna said. He said the coming week had only Tuesday available for detailed hearing as Monday and Wednesday had been reserved for miscellaneous cases. Thursday and Friday are marked as gazetted and local holidays in the court's calendar.

The petitions have referred to a reported judgment of the top court in 2013 in *Subramanian Swamy v Election Commission of India* that the election process should "have fullest transparency in the system and to restore the confidence of the voters".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Ballot tally

Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) is an independent system attached with the Electronic Voting Machines that allows the voters to verify that their votes are cast as intended.

- Petitioners have moved top court, seeking that the EC be directed to count all VVPAT slips. They also propose simultaneous VVPAT verification
- On July 17, 2023, the top court had sought the response of the EC on a plea filed by the Association for Democratic Reforms
- EC had said counting of 100% VVPAT slips would pose a great difficulty due to the amount of time it would take
- Court to hear petitioners before first phase of election

Firms without profits donated through electoral bonds

Prasenjit Bose
The Hindu Data Team
KOLKATA/ CHENNAI

BJP encashed over 74% of bonds given by 45 companies with suspect sources of funds

An analysis of data on the purchasers and encashers of electoral bonds between April 12, 2019, and January 24, 2024, reveals that 45 companies, which made an aggregate donation of ₹1,432.4 crore through such bonds, had suspect sources of funds.

The BJP encashed ₹1,068.4 crore, or almost 75% of these bonds. Thirty-three of the 45 firms, which donated these bonds, had negative or near zero net profits, six bought bonds for significantly higher amounts than their declared net profits, three had profits but in aggregate reported negative direct taxes and three had no reported data on net profits or direct taxes paid. This was for the period from 2016-17 to 2022-23.

The analysis undertaken by *The Hindu* in collaboration with a team of independent researchers, reviewed a total 385 companies that had donated bonds worth ₹5,362.2 crore in aggregate to the ruling BJP, which was the party that had received the largest share of the bonds.

Of this, 221 firms could be matched with the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's Prowess IQ Database on corporate and tax data. The review matched the bond data of these firms (2019-20 to 2023-24) against the profit and direct taxes data.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 9

Taiwan rocked

On edge: A building damaged in an earthquake of 7.4 magnitude that struck east Taiwan on Wednesday. Nine persons were killed and hundreds injured. AFP (REPORT ON PAGE 14)

Sumalatha set to join BJP; not to contest LS polls

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Sumalatha Ambareesh, incumbent Mandya MP, who won as an Independent in the 2019 elections, announced her decision to join the BJP and not contest the elections.

This has brought an end to the suspense over her next move, which kept both the BJP and the Janata Dal (Secular) on tenterhooks as the two have entered into a pre-poll alliance, with the BJP supporting the JD(S) candidate and former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy who is contesting from Mandya. With Ms. Sumalatha withdrawing from the electoral fray and set to join the BJP, Mandya is set to witness a direct contest between the Congress and the JD (S).

Sumalatha Ambareesh

Her decision not to contest the polls and join the BJP also means that the compulsions of coalition politics have forced Ms. Sumalatha to sink her differences with Mr. Kumaraswamy and campaign for him in Mandya in a reversal of scenario that saw acrimonious and no-holds-barred attacks on each other by the two during the last five years.

Ms. Sumalatha announced her decision at a public meeting of her supporters in Mandya on Wednesday.

She said the present political climate is such that people leave political parties or switch parties on being denied a ticket. But she was joining a political party though she was not given a ticket. "The BJP offered me Mysuru, Bengaluru North, and Chickballapur, but I decided not to leave Mandya at any cost and will stay here despite not contesting the elections this time," Ms. Sumalatha said.

"I am not contesting the elections this year, but this does not mean that I am leaving Mandya. On the contrary, you will see me – not as an Independent but as someone with the backing of the rank and file of a party whose leader envisages a developed India by 2047," she said, giving her first hint of joining the BJP, which was followed by her official announcement.

That she was set to join the BJP also stemmed from her remarks that Prime Minister Narendra Modi treated her with due respect and, notwithstanding the fact that she was an Independent MP, had released funds to the tune of ₹4,000 crore for Mandya district, said Ms. Sumalatha.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 2

KSE reaches Delhi but Shah calls off meeting

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who had invited Bharatiya Janata Party rebel leader K.S. Eshwarappa to Delhi for consultations, unexpectedly called off the conciliatory meeting after the latter arrived in the national capital on Wednesday night.

DETAILS ON » PAGE 4

NEARBY

BWSSB to save water via supply cut to big users

BENGALURU
The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board has planned to save 60 MLD of water daily by employing a supply cut to big consumers. This will make up for 12% of the 500 MLD water deficit the city faces daily this summer. The board announced a 20% supply cut to 38 bulk users that include defence establishments, HAL, Biocon, Nimhans, Bangalore University, among others. However, hospitals are exempted from this cut.

» PAGE 2

Efforts on to rescue child from borewell

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Efforts are on to rescue a two-year-old child that fell into a borewell in Lachayan village of Vijayapura district on Wednesday.

Satwik Mujagond fell into the borewell when he went out to play near his house.

Officers of various departments rushed to the village and launched efforts to rescue him. They dropped pipes to supply oxygen to the child.

The child is estimated to have fallen, head first, to a depth of around 20 ft. It is stuck mid-way.

In the morning on Wednesday, officers lowered a motor to draw water from the well. But the hole remained uncovered.

The child fell into the pipe in the evening.

Someone who heard the child cry informed the family.

Satwik Mujagonda

Officers of the taluk panchayat, police, Fire and Emergency Services and revenue are camping on the spot. Minister M.B. Patil reviewed the rescue efforts, officers said.

A team of officers, led by Superintendent of Police Rishikesh Sonawane, are stationed at the spot. Engineers are trying to dig a trench next to the borewell so that they can stop the boy from sliding down further and rescue him.

An earthmover was pressed into service on Wednesday night to dig a trench close to the borewell in an effort to rescue the boy stuck in the pipe at Lachyan village of Vijayapura district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Officers have managed to lower a mini camera to keep an eye on the boy. On a monitor fixed outside, they can see the boy trying to move his hands and legs, the police said. A pipe carrying oxygen has reached the boy.

A team of doctors is waiting with an ambulance. As soon as the child is rescued, he will be admitted to a hospital for stabilisation and further treatment.

The child's father, Satish Mujagonda, said that the family is in shock, but they are hopeful of seeing the boy being rescued.

In SC, T.N. accuses Centre of delaying disaster relief funds

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

'The differential treatment given to some States... is tantamount to class discrimination'

Tamil Nadu on Wednesday filed a suit in the Supreme Court accusing the Union government of treating the people of the State in a "step-motherly" fashion by delaying the release of disaster relief funds of nearly ₹38,000 crore sought by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to help tide over the twin calamities of Cyclone Michaung and unprecedented floods.

"There is no justification in delaying the release of funds. The differential treatment in the release of funds in comparison to other States is tantamount to class discrimination. It violates the fundamental rights of those who have suffered due to calamities and faced greater hardships and irreparable losses. This step-motherly treatment violates the National Disaster Management Policy, including financial relations and the federal nature of tax division by unfairly allocating funds to some States over others," the State of Tamil Nadu submitted in the court.

The suit was filed by the State under Article 131 of the Constitution.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Brazilian *wunderkind* Endrick all set to take the centrestage at Madrid

The newest recruit in Ancelotti's side — who rose to stardom after his stellar performance for Palmeiras — shares the South American nation's illustrious genealogy of young footballing talents, which spans from Pele in the 1950s to Ronaldo Nazario in the 90s to Neymar in the 2010s

GETTY IMAGES

Pranay Rajiv

The only thing Brazil produces more prodigiously than football *wunderkinds* is probably coffee.

The South American nation's illustrious genealogy of young footballing talents, which spans from Pele in the 1950s to Ronaldo Nazario in the 90s to Neymar in the 2010s, has its latest offering – Endrick.

The 17-year-old forward offered a glimpse of his yet-to-be-fully tapped goalscoring skills, when he found the net twice for Brazil in the recent set of international friendlies.

The first was a late winner - a scrappy tap-in - at Wembley against England. The second was a left-footed piledriver from the edge of the box against Spain at the Bernabeu, his soon-to-be home ground.

It all started for Endrick in the junior divisions of Brazilian football with Palmeiras where the forward scored goals by the truckload. The youngster was soon thrown into the deep end of professional football, at the ripe age of 16, becoming the youngest to appear for Palmeiras' senior team.

Within months, Real Madrid - which has been signing Brazilian prodigies with vengeance after missing out on Neymar to Barcelona in 2013 - stitched up a contract to make Endrick a *Los Blancos* player by July 2024 for a reported $50 million.

To make it better for Madrid, Endrick chose the Spanish capital side over rival Barca, whose manager Xavi had marked the Brazilian teenager as one for the future.

"He has great finishing, dribbling and capacity to make a difference on the pitch. He is a player already of the present – playing in the Brazilian league – and also the future," said Xavi before Endrick elected the white side of the *El Clasico* rivalry.

Despite the spotlight magnifying on him manifold, Endrick kept doing what he does best – score goals.

In the 2023 Brazilian Serie A league, Endrick led the line for Palmeiras in its title win, scoring 11 goals, despite starting just 18 games. His goals/90 (0.64) was the best in the league for any player with more than five goals.

Only one under-18 player has scored more goals in a season in the Brazilian league – Ronaldo Nazario.

"I think he is a boy with a very promising future and that he is already acting as a professional," proclaimed Ronaldo, as he vouched for Endrick to be drafted into the 2022 Brazil World Cup team, which eventually didn't happen.

It is inevitable for any up-and-coming Brazilian footballer to be compared with the likes of Ronaldo, Neymar and others. To draw the lines of mystical connections between players of the past and the potential vision of a yet-to-be fully-developed talent is an exercise fraught with danger.

Endrick though has grown accustomed to the glare of footballing popularity which he has bequeathed.

"I was angry because I wanted to show them [critics] who I was. I tried to counter the criticism and show who I am. But then I understood that I didn't need to prove it, I didn't need to show the opposite. If they want to insult me, I won't see it. Criticism doesn't hurt me anymore," said Endrick in an interview with *The Guardian*.

Playing style

In terms of playing style - if one can use a broad brush of categorisation - Endrick is closer to Ronaldo than Neymar.

Though adept with the ball, the left-footed Endrick prefers goalscoring over ball-carrying. In the 2023 Serie A season, the youngster attempted just 4.28 take-ons/90 minutes with a success rate of 45.9 %.

In comparison, Endrick's compatriot and soon-to-be Real Madrid teammate Vinicius Jr. - the last Brazilian wonder kid who made it big - has attempted 8.82 take-ons/90 mins in the ongoing LaLiga season.

Endrick also prefers to play centrally, often slotting in as a sole striker or as a withdrawn one. Over the last two seasons, he has shown his ability to consistently be at the right place to pounce on the rebounds and half-chances, much like the one he gobbled up against England in Wembley.

The 17-year-old also has a stirring long shot in his locker with three of his 11 goals for Palmeiras in the 2023 Serie A season coming from outside the box. The best of the three was a 25-yard grounded sizzler which he scored against Internacional.

Despite being just 1.73m tall, Endrick is a handy customer in the air. He wins 0.81 aerial duels/90 mins - with a success rate of 28% - which towers over Vinicius' number of 0.06 aerial duels/90 mins.

Where does he fit in at Real Madrid?

Much like in the past, Real Madrid has created itself a problem of plenty. The addition of Endrick means Carlo Ancelotti's side now has three supremely talented Brazilian attackers, with Vinicius and Rodrygo being the other two.

With Endrick's inability to play down the left and Vinicius' undroppable stature, Rodrygo will likely be the direct competitor for the Brazilian newcomer. With Jude Bellingham offering a regular goal-scoring outlet from the midfield, it seems unlikely that Ancelotti will opt to play all three of his Brazilian attackers.

To top it up, Madrid is ever so close to ending its seemingly endless pursuit of French goal-scoring freak Kylian Mbappe from PSG. This could push Endrick further down the pecking order, compromising his playing time.

Endrick, and his legions of supporters, though will take solace in Ancelotti's man-management skill which has prompted the blossoming of several young talents in recent years.

For all its celebrated lineage, Brazil's *wunderkind* outlet has its share of hit-and-misses. The cases of Alexandro Pato, Ganso and Robinho are just a few of the many who faded away after promising so much.

Endrick's destiny is unknown, his future tangent on many elements, some out of his control. But if there is anything better than envisaging what could have been, it is foreseeing the possibility of what would be.

THE GIST

- Endrick found the net twice for Brazil in the recent set of international friendlies
- The youngster led the line for Palmeiras in its title win, scoring 11 goals, despite starting just 18 games in the 2023 Brazilian Serie A league
- His goals/90 (0.64) was the best in the league for any player with more than five goals

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INBRIEF

Door delivery of mango boxes to be launched today

The Department of Posts is commencing door delivery of mango boxes in coordination with various mango growers and mango board from Thursday.

According to a release, the mangoes are packed by the farmers in boxes of 3 kgs each and are delivered through postman on the same day or the next day. At present, this facility of delivery of the mangoes would be available in Bengaluru City, the release stated. Last year, the DoP between March and August 2023 booked 16,060 mango parcels, the release stated.

49th convocation of IIMB to be held on Saturday

The 49th convocation of the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) will be held on Saturday, and T.V. Narendran Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Tata Steel, will be the chief guest. He will also deliver the convocation address. Students from the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and MBA programmes - the Post Graduate Programme in Enterprise Management (PGPEM), Executive Post Graduate Programme in Management (EPGP), Post Graduate Programme in Business Analytics (PGP-BA), and Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) will be awarded degrees during the convocation.

The MBA students will also be awarded gold medals for Best All-Round Performance, first rank and second rank. Further, this year, IIMB is also introducing Best Research Award with a cash prize for a graduating student of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programme.

Bikes destroyed in fire at J.P. Nagar

As many as four bikes were destroyed and a few houses were partially damaged in a fire that broke out in one of the vehicles parked outside a house in Chamundiupura in Sarakki in J.P. Nagar in the wee hours of Wednesday. A few residents who noticed fire and smoke in the houses rushed out and removed the other vehicles, including two bikes and two cars, to safety. But by then, four bikes were gutted. The fire even spread to the adjacent houses damaging windows and doors. A sewing machine was burnt and some pet birds died due to the fire. The police, who conducted a spot inspection, suspect foul play. They are now verifying the CCTV footage from in and around to identify the reason behind the fire.

From Page One

Sumalatha set to join BJP; not to contest LS polls

She also contrasted the respect she received from the BJP leaders with the "disdain" displayed by Congress and cited a senior party leader who was quoted as saying that the "Congress had no need for Sumalatha in the past, has no need for her in the present and nor will it need her in future."

BWSSB set to save nearly 60 MLD through supply cut to big consumers

This will make up for 12% of the 500 MLD water deficit faced by Bengaluru every day this summer

WATER WOES

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

Amidst a raging water crisis in the city, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) now aims to save 60 MLD of water daily through supply cut to big consumers. This will make up for 12% of the 500 MLD water deficit the city faces daily this summer.

BWSSB has categorised big consumers into three categories – bulk users (over 2 crore litres a day), big consumers (who use 20 lakh to 40 lakh litres a day), and those who consume between 40 lakh and 2 crore litres a day. Put together, they consume 525 Million Litres per Day (MLD), which is 36% of the water the city draws from Cauvery river every day.

The board announced a 20% supply cut to 38 bulk users that include defence establishments, HAL, Biocon, Nimhans, Bangalore University, among others, on March 15. Through this, the city is saving nearly 12 MLD daily. Hospitals are exempted from this cut.

Now, the supply cut will be expanded to other big users, mostly big commercial establishments, apartment complexes and industries that consume between 20 lakh and 2 crore litres of water a day. There are nearly 20,000 such consumers across Bengaluru.

Depending on the water situation in May, BWSSB may go for a second phase and cut supply to these big users by another 10%.

"We have already met of consumers who use between 40 lakh and 2 crore litres a day. On April 4, we will meet those who consume between 20 lakh and 40 lakh litres a day. These users use 475 MLD. In the first phase, we are cutting supply to big consumers by 10% in the month of April. Through this, BWSSB will save nearly 50 MLD of water every day," said Ram Prasath Manohar V., Chairman, BWSSB.

Depending on the water situation in May, the board may go for a second phase and cut supply to these big users by another 10%, he added. Mr. Manohar said 10-20% water supply cut is not insurmountable to these establishments if they adopt simple water conservation techniques.

For instance, installing aerators that restrict the flow of water from taps can potentially save a minimum of 30% of water. Given these are large establishments, many of them have Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs). The water board has told them to use treated water for flushing and gardening, among other uses.

In the long run, if all these establishments harvest rainwater effectively, store them and continue to use treated water, these supply cuts may become permanent. The Cauvery river water thus saved would be to diverted to areas in need, sources said.

BULK USERS OF WATER

	Number of users	Kind of users	Water they consume	Supply cut proposed	Water saved
Users who consume over 2 crore litres a day	38	Defence establishments, HAL, Biocon, Nimhans, Bangalore University	59 MLD	20%	11.8 MLD
Users who consume between 40 lakh and 2 crore litres a day	Around 2,000	Mostly large commercial establishments, apartments and industries	275 MLD	10%	27.5 MLD
Users who consume between 20 lakh and 40 lakh litres a day	Around 18,000	Mostly large commercial establishments, apartments and industries	200 MLD	10%	20 MLD
Total			**525 MLD**		**59.3 MLD**

Man tries to end life in front of judges in High Court; a cheating case filed by him was quashed in June 2023

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 51-year-old man tried to slit his throat and neck in front of the judges inside Court Hall-1 of the High Court of Karnataka when the judicial proceedings were under way before a Division Bench headed by the Chief Justice on Wednesday afternoon.

The incident occurred around 1 p.m. when the Bench comprising Chief Justice N.V. Anjaria and Justice H.B. Prabhakara Sastry was hearing a petition related to mines and minerals listed at serial number 26 of the cause list of the day.

The man, who has been identified by the police as C. Srinivas, came close to the platform where the court officers sit in front of the podium where the judges sit. He kept some papers related to certain litigation on the table in front of the court officers and tried to slit his throat and neck using a sharp object brought by himself.

FROM THE COURT

The Bench was engaged in hearing the arguments of the advocate for the petitioner and the government advocate on the petition listed at serial number 26 when the man resorted to these acts. The man appeared to have uttered something to the court officer and the judges before cutting, inflicting self-injuries.

Following this, the Chief Justice summoned the police personnel and asked them to take the man to the doctor immediately as he was bleeding. He was rushed to Bowring hospital in an ambulance for treatment.

Justice Sastry asked how a man could enter the court hall despite the tight security for carrying out checks and wanted to know what kind of sharp object the man possessed. He told the court officers not to touch the papers that the man had kept on the table.

Meanwhile, the Chief Justice summoned the Registrar General and directed that the incident be referred to the jurisdictional police as per the procedure. As the man was able to walk, the police quickly escorted him outside the court hall.

The Bench then adjourned the hearing on the remaining five petitions listed on the cause list to enable the police to follow the procedure as a government advocate said that the police had to conduct the spot mahazar.

A few lawyers, court staff, some government employees, and a few litigants were present in the courtroom when the incident occurred. According to some of the lawyers present in the court, the man said something before injuring himself with a small, sharp object. Though the Court staff could not immediately establish his identity or his case, the police have said that his name is C. Srinivas from Mysuru.

It appears that he registered an FIR for a cheating case against certain persons in Mysuru in 2021. However, the High Court quashed the FIR in June 2023 on a petition filed by the accused persons stating that it was purely a civil dispute. Mr. Srinivas had unsuccessfully argued before the court in that case personally without engaging any advocate. However, it is not known yet whether any of his case is pending in the court at present.

Though the proceedings of Court Hall-1 were live on the High Court's YouTube channel on Wednesday, the man's actions were not visible to viewers as the cameras installed for the videoconference system in the court hall were audio-tracking cameras, which constantly switch focus on speakers based on sound receivers in the mics. The High Court's administration subsequently restricted the public's access to the recorded proceedings.

Later, the court hall was readied for the pre-scheduled official function to bid farewell to Justice Sastry, who retired from service on Wednesday.

Vidhana Soudha police are investigating by registering a First Information Report.

The police have yet to ascertain the details of the man.

(*Those having distress or suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani on 104 for help*)

Senior journalist Bhaskar Rao passes away

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Senior journalist M.K. Bhaskar Rao, 75, passed away in Bengaluru on Wednesday morning. He was suffering from cancer for the past two years and was being treated at a private hospital where he passed away on Wednesday morning, sources close to him informed. He is survived by his wife and two children. Bhaskar Rao grew up in Sagar, Shivamogga district where he completed his education and later became a journalist. He worked at leading Kannada daily *Prajavani* for over three decades and retired as an assistant editor. Earlier, he worked as the district reporter of Raichur and later as a film reporter for the newspaper in Bengaluru. He was active in Kannada theatre and has acted in a handful of films.

In later years, Bhaskar Rao became a columnist known for his sharp analysis of current affairs, mainly politics of Karnataka.

BMTC bus crew encounters leopards near Turahalli Forest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus crew along the Kengeri-Chikkegowdanapalya route on Wednesday sighted two leopards, one of which was an eight-month-old cub, in the vicinity of Turahalli Forest, near Kanakapura Road in the city.

As per a statement issued by the BMTC, a bus plying on route number 224 from Kengeri bus stand to Chikkegowdanapalya, encountered a leopard near Turahalli forest. A mother leopard and her cub approached the bus and took shelter underneath it. While the Forest Department officials successfully captured the cub, the mother leopard managed to escape. Efforts are currently underway by the Forest Department to locate and capture the mother leopard, BMTC added in the release.

Forest Department officials successfully captured the cub, but the mother leopard managed to escape. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

N. Ravindra Kumar Deputy Conservator of Forest (Bengaluru Urban) said that Forest Department officials rescued the leopard cub from underneath the BMTC bus. He clarified that it was not hit by the bus but was resting underneath the vehicle. "Forest Department officials captured the leopard, and it was handed over to People of Animal (PFA) personnel. The cub was dehydrated and it was administered treatment. It is recouping and doing fine now," Mr Kumar said.

He added that once the cub has completely recovered, it will be released into the forest area. He also said that the mother of the cub has not been spotted by the forest officials

In the past too, leopards have been spotted in the area. In 2022, one was seen moving around the vicinity of Banashankari 6th Stage for a few days by local residents. The big cat had also killed a spotted deer whose carcass was found in the Turahalli State Forest Area.

Transport union urges BMTC to revoke conductor's suspension for assault on passenger

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka transport union has demanded ending the suspension of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) conductor who was arrested for allegedly assaulting a female passenger. The union has criticised the BMTC management for not assisting the conductor secure bail.

In a letter addressed to BMTC Managing Director Ramachandran R., KSRTC Staff and Workers' Federation president H.V. Ananth Subbarao expressed concern over the lack of initiative by the corporation in securing bail for the employee.

Mr. Subbarao highlighted that the conductor secured bail following intervention by the union.

On March 26, Siddapura police arrested Honnappa Nagappa Agasar, a 35-year-old BMTC conductor, on the charge of allegedly assaulting a 24-year-old private firm employee following a row over the ticket. The bus was plying between Bilekahalli and Shivajinagar.

"We have reviewed the CCTV camera footage from the bus. The passenger engaged in an argument with the conductor regarding the ticket. The footage clearly shows the woman hit the bus conductor first, triggering the conductor to react in self-defence. Rather than taking steps to secure bail for the conductor, the BMTC management opted to suspend him from duty. Fortunately, through the efforts of our federation, he has since been released on bail," Mr Subbarao stated in the letter.

"Contrary to the woman's complaint lodged at Siddapura police station, the CCTV camera footage does not support her allegations.

According to her complaint, the conductor allegedly refused to issue a ticket and assaulted her.

The BMTC management hastily suspended him without proper verification of the CCTV camera footage, or even questioning the conductor. This action constitutes a breach of the industrial agreement," he added, while demanding that the conductor's suspension be revoked.

Based on the woman's complaint, the police had arrested Nagappa and charged him under Sections 354 (assault or use of criminal force on any woman, intending to outrage her modesty), 323 (assault), 506 (criminal intimidation), and 509 (insult the modesty of any woman, utter any word, make any sound or gesture, or exhibit any object), of the Indian Penal Code.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is brought to the notice of the general public that my client **Mr.Sebastian Brian S** Residing at No.1214, 2nd Main, 1st Stage 3rd Block, HRBR lay-out, Bangalore 560 043. is purchasing the schedule mentioned property form the joint owners Mr.Samran S.Reddy and Mr.Challa Muralikrishna, Any person having objection in the said transaction may file their objection before the undersigned advocate within seven days from the date of this notice failing which the transaction shall be completed.

SCHEDULE

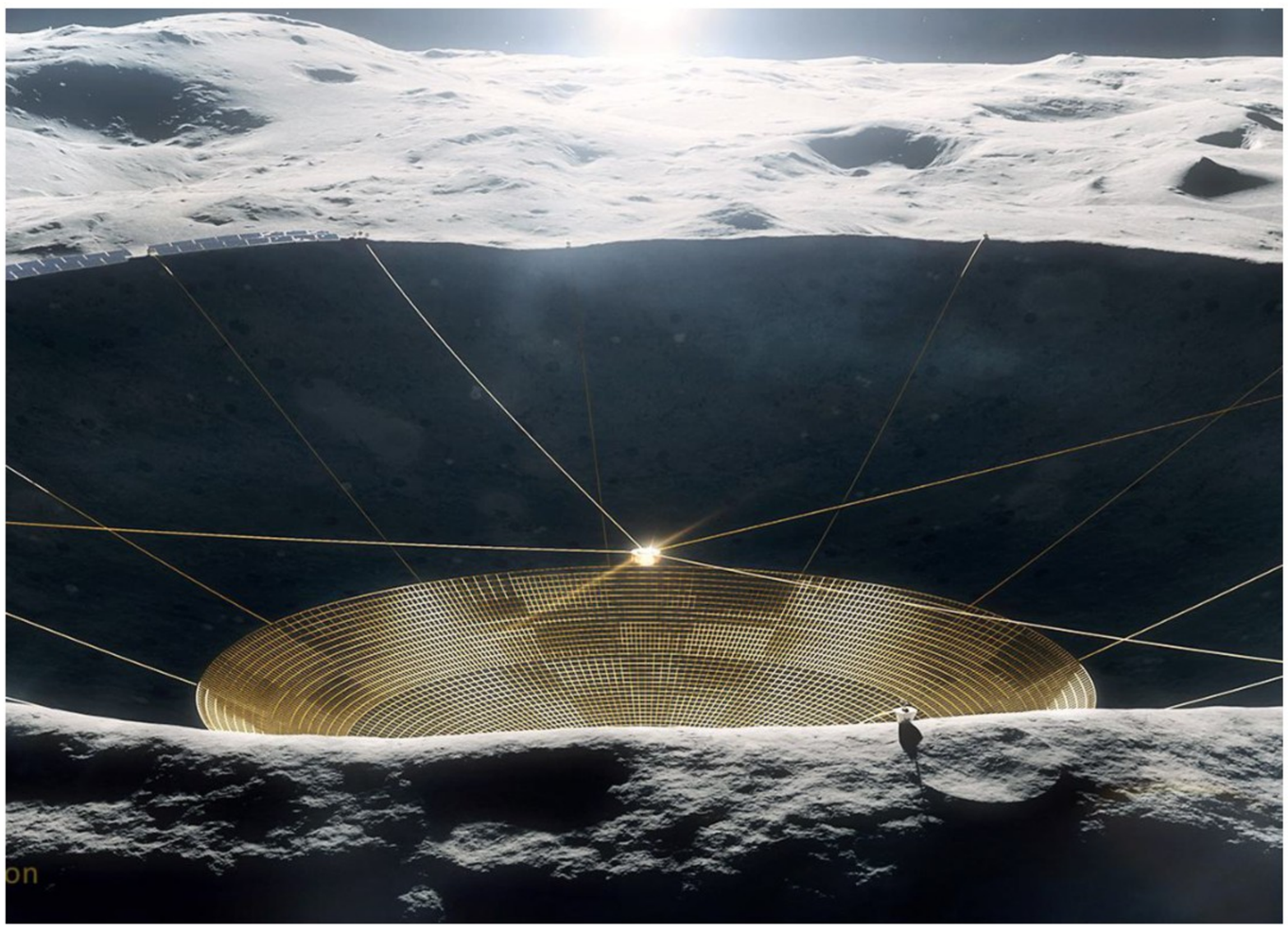
All that piece and parcel of residential property bearing No.714, PID.NO.68-1-714, Situated at 6th "B" Cross, 16th Main Road, 3d Block, Koramangala BDA Lay out, Bangalore, coming under BBMP ward no.68. Measuring East to West : 40 feet, North to South : 61 Feet Construction: Ground floor and first floor Built with RCC, vitrified tiles, Steel windows. Built up area: 2300 Sq.feet. Bounded on:
East by : Property No. 715,
West by : Property No.713
North by : Road **South by :** Property No.691.

J. RAVINDRAN Advocate
No.310, 4th Cross, 6th Main, Viveknagar, Bangalore 569947 Mobile :9900609429

India among countries mulling telescopes on, around the moon

Astronomers are now seriously considering an idea they have toyed with since the 1950s: placing optical and radio telescopes on the moon's far side. The pristine, airless desolation here provides crystal-clear seeing conditions throughout the long lunar night, which lasts two weeks at a time

Prakash Chandra



The moon's surface is covered in craters and one of these natural depressions could provide a support structure for a radio telescope dish, like this concept art for the NASA Lunar Crater Radio Telescope shows. VLADIMIR VUSTYANSKY/NASA

Astronomers are looking forward to opening a new window on the universe by posting high-resolution telescopes on the moon and in orbit around it. There are numerous proposals to do this from astronomers around the world, including one from India called PRATUSH.

On the earth, optical telescopes (which collect visible light at longer wavelengths) and radio telescopes (which collect radio waves with the shortest wavelengths) have to peer through layers of the planet's atmosphere. While it is becoming increasingly difficult for optical instruments to see through the polluted skies, radio telescopes also contend with radio and TV signals adding to the cacophony of the electromagnetic 'hiss' from the communications channels used by radar systems, aircraft, and satellites. It also does not help that the earth's ionosphere blocks radio waves coming from outer space.

A pristine desolation

Scientists tried to find a way out of this by launching radio telescopes into orbit around the earth. But this only made the problem worse, as orbiting telescopes started receiving radio noise from the whole planet along with signals from outer space. So astronomers are now seriously considering an idea they have toyed with since the 1950s: placing optical and radio telescopes on the far side of the moon, which always faces away from the earth.

The pristine, airless desolation of the moon provides optical telescopes crystal-clear seeing conditions throughout the long lunar night, which lasts two weeks at a time. Radio telescopes on the lunar far side will also be protected by a 3,475-km-thick wall – a.k.a. the moon (its diameter is 3,476 km) – that blots out radio transmissions from the earth and electrically charged plasma winds blowing from the Sun.

In the past, the enormous costs involved discouraged scientists from setting up lunar telescopes. But renewed interest among spacefaring nations to return to the moon promises to open up "the most radio-quiet location in the solar system", to quote The Royal Society, to astronomers.

The oldest light in the universe

Once upon a time, cosmologists believe, everything in the cosmos was condensed into an infinitesimally small, incredibly dense blob in the void that exploded with a 'Big Bang'. The resulting fireball cooled as it spread and its blinding light faded into a gathering darkness. At some point, the young universe resembled a formless sea of murky matter, highlighted only by traces of primordial hydrogen and helium.

This darkness persisted from some 300,000 to half a billion years after the Big Bang, which is why there is so little direct evidence today of this important period in the cosmic story. The blackness in the heavens was banished only when the first stars switched on their nuclear power-plants and the cosmos continued to expand. We see this expansion now as a faint glow called the cosmic microwave background (CMB), the oldest light in the universe, which can be captured by radio telescopes.

Meanwhile, the universe went 'quiet' for tens of millions of years afterwards as gravity began to build the first stars and galaxies. This period of time between the initial scattering of the CMB radiation and the birth of the first stars is known as the Dark Ages. It is believed the neutral hydrogen pervading the cosmos during the Dark Ages absorbed some of the CMB radiation to produce an extremely small dip in the frequency of the spreading radio waves.

China may be the first, again

Terrestrial instruments can't detect this minute frequency drop. Instead, moon-based instruments are our best bet to spot this signal from the Dark Ages, which would be essentially free from the influence of any starlight (since there were no stars then).

"We want to study the Dark Ages period because it connects how the early universe evolved into the universe we see today," Aritogi Suzuki, who heads the Lunar Surface Electromagnetic Experiment, or LuSEE Night, a joint NASA-Berkeley Lab project, scheduled for launch in December 2025, told this author via email. "We are going to land on the far side of the moon, near the equator of the moon, and almost exactly opposite from the earth. This location is helpful because it best shields radio frequency noise coming from the earth."

LuSEE Night will be followed by many moon-bound instruments currently in various stages of planning with space agencies like NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA). NASA's Long-Baseline Optical Imaging Interferometer, for instance, is scheduled to be launched in parts before this decade is out. Once assembled on the moon's far side, it will study magnetic activity on stars and the centres of active galaxies in visible and ultraviolet wavelengths.

> Radio telescopes also contend with radio and TV signals adding to the cacophony of the electromagnetic 'hiss' from communications channels used by radar systems, aircraft, and satellites

ESA is getting ready to launch a radio telescope to the moon's far side on board its lunar lander, 'Argonaut', by 2030. Other European projects on the anvil include super-sensitive detectors to hunt for the elusive ripples of gravitational waves in space-time and an infrared telescope located inside a permanently shadowed crater near the lunar south pole.

First off the block, however, could be China, with a moon-orbiting radio telescope scheduled for launch in 2026. Another of its satellites, Queqiao-2, intended as a communications relay between the earth and future missions, probably entered into orbit around the moon on March 24. Its payload includes a 4.2-m antenna that will be used as, among other things, a radio telescope.

PRATUSH radio telescope

Although the technologies for these instruments exist, it is difficult for scientists to deploy them on the moon. "An alternative approach," Dr. Suzuki said, "would be to orbit ... the moon instead of landing on the surface and study the data when the satellite is behind the moon."

This is what Indian scientists plan to do with the radio telescope PRATUSH (Probing ReionizATion of the Universe using Signal from Hydrogen), to study the universe from the moon's far side. PRATUSH is being built by the Raman Research Institute (RRI) in Bengaluru with active collaboration from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Initially, ISRO will place PRATUSH into orbit around the earth. After some fine-tuning, the space agency will launch it moonwards. "Although earth orbit will have significant radio frequency interference (RFI), it will have advantages compared to ground-based experiments, such as operating in free space and lesser ionosphere impact," Mayuri S. Rao and Saurabh Singh, principal investigators at RRI, explained in an email. "PRATUSH in lunar orbit will have the ideal observing conditions operating in free space with minimal RFI and no ionosphere to speak of." It will carry a wideband frequency-independent antenna, a self-calibrating analog receiver and a digital correlator to catch radio noise in the all-important signal from the Dark Ages.

As astronomers open new windows from the moon to look at the far reaches of the universe, who knows what discoveries await them. One thing is certain: they are in for some exciting times as the cosmos yields clues to some of its greatest mysteries, such as dark energy (which pushes the universe in every direction at an accelerating rate), primordial black holes and, indeed, the very nature of the cosmos.

(Prakash Chandra is a science writer.)

For most people, the determination of which hand is dominant may come down to chance. SINDY SÜSSENGUT/UNSPLASH

Genes involved in cell shape offer clues on left-handedness

Reuters

Why are some people left-handed while most are righties? This is an area of active research, and a new study sheds light on a genetic component of left-handedness in some people. Researchers identified rare variants of a gene involved in controlling the shape of cells and found them to be 2.7-times more common in left-handed people.

While these genetic variants account for only about 0.1% of left-handedness, the researchers said the study shows that this gene, called TUBB4B, may play a role in the development of the brain asymmetry that underlies the determination of a dominant hand.

In most people, the two halves, or hemispheres, of the brain have slightly different anatomies and are dominant for different functions.

"For example, most people have left-hemisphere dominance for language and right-hemisphere dominance for tasks that require directing visual attention to a location in space," said neurobiologist Clyde Francks of the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands, senior author of the study published on April 2 in the journal *Nature Communications*.

The identification of rare mutations in TUBB4B that are more common in left-handers suggests that it is responsible for setting up the brain's normal asymmetries

"In most people, the left hemisphere also controls the dominant right hand. The relevant nerve fibres cross from left to right in the lower part of the brain. In left-handers, the right hemisphere is in control of the dominant hand. The question is: what causes the asymmetry of the brain to develop differently in left-handers?"

TUBB4B controls a protein that gets integrated into filaments called microtubules that provide internal structure for cells. The identification of rare mutations in this gene that are more common in left-handers suggests that microtubules are involved in setting up the brain's normal asymmetries, Mr. Francks said.

The two cerebral hemispheres start to develop differently in the human embryo, though the mechanism has remained unclear.

"Rare genetic variants in just a handful of people can pinpoint genes that give clues to developmental mechanisms of brain asymmetry in everyone. TUBB4B could be a good example of this," Mr. Francks added.

The findings were based on genetic data covering more than 350,000 middle-aged to older adults in Britain in a dataset called the U.K. Biobank. About 11% were left-handed.

For most people, the determination of which hand is dominant may come down to chance.

"We think that most instances of left-handedness occur simply due to random variation during development of the embryonic brain, without specific genetic or environmental influences. For example, random fluctuations in the concentrations of certain molecules during key stages of brain formation," Mr. Francks said.

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Reading the weather

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

When water evaporates from a surface, it takes away some heat, leaving the surface cooler. In some given ambient conditions, what is the lowest temperature to which a surface can be cooled by the evaporation of water from it called?

QUESTION 2

Measuring this temperature is easy; it's equal to the temperature reading on a thermometer that is exposed to air but shielded from direct sunlight. Its value is also used to assess whether an individual is psychologically comfortable in their thermal environment. What is this temperature called?

QUESTION 3

The warmer the air is, the more humid it can be. This is one way global warming is producing wetter cyclones. What is the name for the amount of moisture in air adjusted to the maximum amount it can hold at that temperature?

QUESTION 4

Cooler air can hold less moisture. So if you take some air at a given temperature, say 50% filled with moisture, cooling it to a certain point will automatically make it 100% filled with moisture. What is this point called?

QUESTION 5

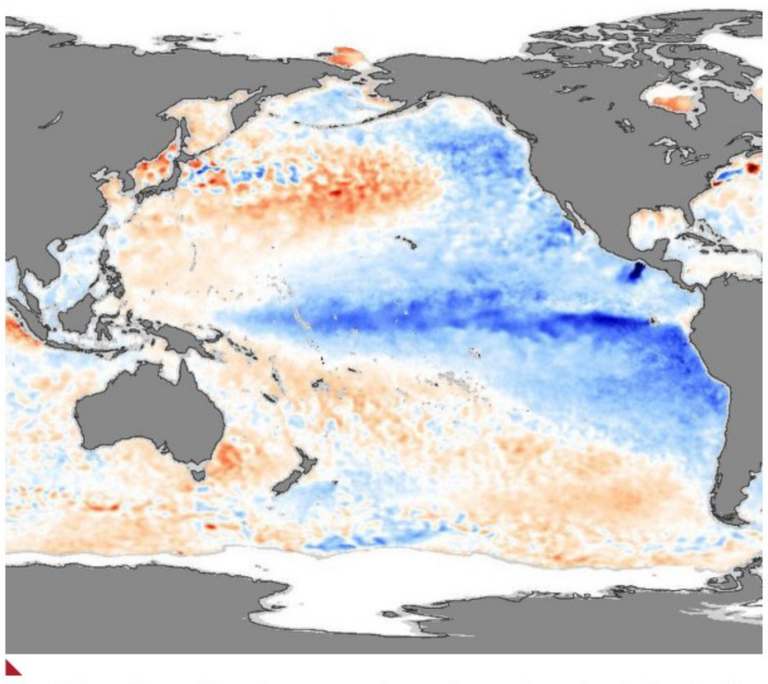
The World Health Organisation and the World Meteorological Organisation adopted X in 1994. X is typically measured using a scale. Low values on the scale indicate a level of solar radiation that can be good for the skin, whereas higher values indicate a risk of sunburn, DNA damage, and cataracts. What is X?

Answers to April 2 quiz:

1. Highly geologically active Jovian moon with a warm surface – **Ans: Io**
2. Solar System's largest asteroid with potential presence of brine on its surface – **Ans: Ceres**
3. Planetary body aside from the earth with liquid cycle on its surface – **Ans: Titan**
4. Neptunian moon with retrograde rotation – **Ans: Triton**
5. Saturnian moon that ejects plumes through its ice shell – **Ans: Enceladus**

Visual: **Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE)**

First contact: P.N. Moorthy | K.N. Viswanathan | Nitin Das



Visual: Name the weather phenomenon shown above, where a band of cool water spreads from east to west across the equatorial Pacific Ocean. NASA

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Shobha, Rajeev Gowda, 85 other candidates submit nominations in State

Candidates declare movable and immovable assets held by them and their families

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Several candidates, including Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje, former Rajya Sabha member M.V. Rajeev Gowda, and former Minister Kota Shrinivas Poojary, filed their nominations on Wednesday, for the April 26 Lok Sabha elections in Karnataka. Overall, 87 candidates filed 116 sets of nominations on Wednesday.

Bengaluru North BJP candidate Shobha Karandlaje arriving to file her nomination on Wednesday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

V. Somanna, BJP candidate for Tumakuru seat, submitting his nomination papers on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Rajeev Gowda
M.V. Rajeev Gowda, the Congress candidate for Bengaluru North, has declared total assets worth ₹134.02 crore. This includes assets held by him and his family. While he has declared total assets worth ₹34.59 crore held by him, his wife Sharmila Bhaktaram is way richer than him with assets worth ₹99.42 crore (including ₹6.85 crore movable assets), as per the affidavit. Besides, he has declared movable assets of ₹2,20,813 in the name of his daughter Rishika Vijaylakshmi Gowda. His wife owns diamond and gold jewellery worth ₹37.67 crores. In 2014, when he was elected to the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Gowda had declared assets of ₹49 crore.

Mansoor Ali Khan
Mansoor Ali Khan, the Congress candidate for Bengaluru Central, has declared total assets worth ₹97.32 crore. This includes assets held by him, his wife Tasbia Khan and two sons.

While he has declared total movable assets worth ₹25.88 crore, his family's immovable assets are worth ₹71.44 crore. The total assets held by him are worth ₹77.15 while his wife's total assets are worth ₹19.74 crore, as per the affidavit. Besides, he has declared movable assets of ₹43.31 lakh in the name of his sons.

Apart from shares in Amanath Cooperative Bank and Al Ameen Housing Development Corporation, Mr. Khan owns an Audi S5 Sportback car worth over ₹98 lakh, investments in the realty sector and agricultural land besides bank deposits and gold 2.25 kgs of gold worth over ₹1.38 crore apart from membership in top-notch clubs. Apart from several residential flats in and around Bengaluru, he also owns a flat in Dubai.

Poojary's assets
Mr. Poojary, who has been a Member of the Legislative Council since 2009, a Minister thrice, and presently the Leader of the Opposition in the Council, is worth ₹2.94 crore. He and his family (wife, two daughters, and a son) own moveable assets worth ₹64.2 lakh and immovable assets worth ₹2.3 crore. The immoveable assets include a 4,770 sqft. house built upon 13 cents of land in Giliyar village near Kota.

Jayaprakash Hegde
A three-time MLA, a Minister, and a Lok Sabha member once, K. Jayaprakash Hegde, who headed the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes has declared total assets worth ₹15.34 crore, including ₹1.16 crore worth of movable assets jointly with his wife. He has residential houses in his native village Korgi in Kundapura taluk as well as in Bengaluru. About half of Mr. Hegde's moveable assets are inherited by his father, the affidavit said.

Lok Sabha elections 2024

Shobha Karandlaje
Outgoing Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje, who filed her nomination on Wednesday as BJP candidate from Bangalore North Lok Sabha constituency, has declared assets valued at about ₹13.88 crore. The Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare owns no agricultural land and has only a two-wheeler (Honda Activa), according to her affidavit.

Ms. Karandlaje has declared movable assets worth about ₹9.23 crore, and immovable assets (self-acquired) that have a current market value of about ₹4.65 crore. The 57-year-old owns 1,000 grams of gold biscuit whose current market value is ₹68.40 lakh, and has gold ornaments and silver worth ₹40 lakh. She has five pending criminal cases against her.

In 2019, when she contested and won from Udupi-Chikkamagaluru parliamentary constituency, she had declared assets worth ₹10.48 crore.

Sunil Bose
Sunil Bose, the Congress candidate for Chamarajanagar, has declared movable assets worth ₹3.53 crore while the worth of immovable assets in his name is ₹4.31 crore. His liabilities amount to ₹5.56 crore.

Mr. Bose, son of Minister for Social Welfare H.C. Mahadevappa has declared that he has a pending criminal case registered against him in Nanjangud Rural police station for the distribution of buttermilk and fruits to public and party workers while canvassing for votes on March 28, 2017.

M. Lakshmana
M. Lakshmana, Congress candidate for Mysuru constituency, has declared movable assets worth ₹46.65 lakh including a four-wheeler while his wife's movable assets are worth ₹39.50 lakh. Movable assets in the name of Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) and his two dependents are worth ₹2.56 lakh, ₹45.90 lakh, and ₹18.96 lakh respectively. The market value of Mr. Lakshmana's immovable assets amount to ₹1.5 crore.

Case against Pulakeshinagar MLA Srinivas

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A.C. Srinivas, Pulakeshinagar MLA, and his supporters have been booked for allegedly assaulting Static Surveillance Team members during an inspection to check an unauthorised gathering at his office situated on M.M. Road on Tuesday.

Based on the complaint filed by SST team leader Manjula Saravana, the police charged Srinivas and his supporters under Section 353 (assault or use of criminal force obstructing a public servant from discharging duty) for further investigations. In a complaint, Ms. Manjula said that she along with her team went to the MLA's office for inspection based on a complaint that a meeting had been organised without permission from the election commission.

At the office, hundreds of people gathered to discuss the water problem in their area and they were submitting grievances. The videographer of the SST tried to record the event when people surrounded him and created a ruckus demanding his identity card. While the videographer was trying to reason with them, the violent group manhandled the team, snatched the video and deleted the recording, she alleged.

This amounts to assault and using criminal force as well as a violation of the model code of conduct, she said. The police said they will summon the accused for questioning.

चुनाव का पर्व DESH KA GARV
LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER,
BENGALURU DISTRICT
& CHIEF COMMISSIONER, BBMP
N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

Election Commission of India

GENERAL ELECTION TO LOK SABHA - 2024

Subject: Strict action will be taken against non-attendence of officers / personnel assigned for election duties-reg.

Polling Personnel Deployment:

Date of 1st level Election Training	7th April 2024 at 9.30 AM
Date of 2nd level Election Training	Will be intimated later
Date of Mustering	25th April 2024 at 9.30 AM
Date of Poll	26th April 2024

CAUTION

Failure to report for election training, mustering and election poll duty shall attract cognizable penal action u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 and immediate FIR will be booked against the defaulting official and arrest warrant will be issued to produce official before District Election Officer. Also, disciplinary action will be initiated against such personnel under relevant provisions of service rules.

A Nodal Officer has been appointed from each sponsoring office for the purpose of polling personnel deployment. He shall serve the election duty orders on their staff and ensure their attendance at the training, mustering and poll duty. Any negligence in performing the above said duties shall attract cognizable penal action u/s 134 of RP Act 1951 and disciplinary action under relevant service rules.

Polling personnel can download election duty orders from BBMP website
https://webapps.bbmpgov.in/election2024

PRO's and APRO's are requested to download PRO HANDBOOK from
https://eci.gov.in

District Election Officer, Bengaluru District &
Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Bengaluru

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 04	
RISE 06:14	SET 18:31
RISE 02:35	SET 14:17
FRIDAY, APR. 05	
RISE 06:13	SET 18:31
RISE 03:26	SET 15:19
SATURDAY, APR. 06	
RISE 06:12	SET 18:31
RISE 04:13	SET 16:18

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	36	26
Mysuru	37	24
Bengaluru	37	24

Bengaluru Today
37°C A dry weather to continue. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm afternoon. Night also will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
36°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be pleasant with mist &haze. Day will be very warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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Muniratna

FIR filed against Muniratna

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The police have filed an FIR against Muniratna, Rajarajeshwarinagar MLA, for allegedly threatening to abduct a Congress worker.

Based on the complaint by Samuel, a resident of Lakshmidevinagar, the Nandini Layout police on Tuesday registered an FIR against Muniratna and others.

Samuel, in his complaint, alleged Muniratna used his party workers to force him to come to his office for talks and offered him money work for him. When Samuel refused, Muniratna allegedly threatened him with dire consequences and also forced him to wear the BJP shawl and took pictures of him to blackmail him.

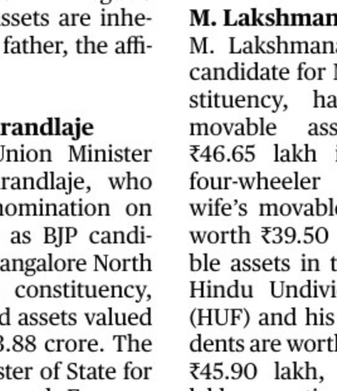
Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (April 4, Thursday), the following articles are available:

- Should State Governments borrow more? **bit.ly/stateborrow**
- India's among nations mulling telescopes on, around the moon **bit.ly/moontelescopes**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Forever in our hearts



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Prof. Dhanapalan College of Science & Mgmt.
Kelambakkam, Chennai
Members of Family, Friends, Management, Alumni, Staffs & Students

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The people at risk of slipping into poverty in Pakistan

10 in million. The World Bank has painted a grim economic picture of Pakistan, cautioning that more people are at risk of descending into poverty. The apprehension comes from a sluggish economic growth rate of 1.8% coupled with soaring inflation. PTI

The estimated rise in the output of mangos this year

14 in percentage. India's overall mango production may increase by about 24 million tonnes this year, the Director of ICAR-Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture said. IMD's forecast of a heat wave may not have a significant impact on the mango yield. PTI

Number of companies incorporated in 2023-24

1.85 in lakh. About 58,990 limited liability partnerships were also incorporated in the fiscal ended March 31, as per a tweet by the Corporate Affairs Ministry. A total of 1,59,339 companies were incorporated in 2022-23. PTI

The projected growth of the Indian economy in 2024

7.5 in percentage. The World Bank revised its earlier projections for the same period by 1.2%. Growth in South Asia is expected to be strong at 6% in 2024, driven by robust growth in India and recoveries in other South Asian countries. PTI

Cruise passengers stuck in Spain port due to visa issues

1,500 passengers. A cruise ship was stuck in the port of Barcelona due to the visa problems of a few Bolivian passengers who were due to disembark there, officials said. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Should State Governments borrow more?

How does the Reserve Bank of India categorise the budgetary expenditures of the Union and State governments? What has been Kerala's track record when it comes to spending on the social sector? From where do State governments receive their funds?

ECONOMIC NOTES

Jayan Jose Thomas

The financial relation between the Union and various State governments has been a matter of vigorous debate. In a recent development, the Government of Kerala has approached the Supreme Court for a resolution of the following question: how much can the State government borrow from the market to bridge the excess of its expenditures over receipts? The Union government says that the borrowing should be limited to 3% of the State's income or Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Kerala contends that by curtailing its borrowing powers, the Centre is undermining the State's ability to fulfil some of its basic financial commitments and violating the principle of federalism.

How States spend more

It is well known that in India the power to raise taxes rests largely with the Union government while a greater part of the overall government spending is done by the State governments. More importantly, when it comes to spending on sectors which affect people's daily lives, the overwhelming responsibility lies on the shoulders of the State governments. On social services, which include health and education, the expenditure incurred in 2022-23 was ₹2,230 billion (1 billion = ₹100 crore) by the Union government while the combined expenditure by all State governments was ₹19,182 billion. The expenditures of all the States put together was bigger than the expenditure of the Union by 8.6 times in social services as a whole; 2.6 times in education; and by 3.8 times in health.

Of course, the spending priorities of the Union and the States are guided by the constitutionally allocated powers and functions for them. Compared to its expenditure on social services, the Union government's spending on defence was approximately twice as high, while its spending on transport, urban development and energy combined was 2.4 times higher.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has categorised the budgetary expenditures by the Union and the State governments as 'developmental' and 'non-developmental'. The former includes expenditures on social services and economic services (such as on agriculture and industry) while the latter refers to interest payments, pensions, subsidies, and so on. It is remarkable that developmental expenditures, and within that, the expenditures on social services incurred by the State governments have risen significantly over the last two decades. As a proportion of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the combined developmental expenditures by all State governments increased from 8.8% in 2004-05 to 12.5% in 2021-22. On the other hand, the social and developmental expenditures by the Union government remained somewhat unchanged over the two-decade period. The upsurge in spending during the 2008-12 period was reversed over the next eight years, with a brief revival after 2020 (Chart 1). In the end, it was the spending by the State governments that has helped to alleviate the livelihood crisis in the country, caused due to the slow growth of rural incomes and employment.

Kerala's experience

Kerala provides an excellent illustration of the power of government spending to positively transform a region's economy and society. The expenditure on education, health and other social sectors as a proportion of the total budgeted expenditures by the State government in Kerala ranged between 40% and 50% for four decades, from the 1960s until the end of the 1990s. The proportion of social sector spending in Kerala was way ahead of the corresponding average of all other States until the middle of the 2000s. From the mid-2000s, while the average proportion of all other States rose upward, the proportion for Kerala stagnated. A substantial part of Kerala's budget (6% in 2022-23) is now devolved to Local Self-Governments (LSGs). If the spending by the LSGs on social sectors is taken into account, the proportion for Kerala could still be higher than the average of all other Indian States (Chart 2).

A sizeable chunk of the government expenditure on social services is in the revenue account, paid as salaries and for covering day-to-day expenses. In fact, the large body of teachers, nurses, and other government employees in Kerala – half of them women – have been a key driver of the State's social achievements over the decades.

At the same time, the pensions paid to retired government employees as well as to members of the disadvantaged sections (such as the elderly, agricultural workers, widows) make up 16.4% of all budgeted expenditures by the Kerala government. This is markedly higher than the average proportion allotted for pensions by all Indian States (9.7%). It is indeed a concern that only 10.6% of Kerala's budgetary resources was directed to capital expenditure (in 2022-23), which is much needed to build new infrastructure and institutions to speed up future growth (Chart 3).

State governments receive funds from three sources: own revenues (tax and non-tax); transfers from the Union government as shares of taxes and as grants; and market borrowings. In 2020-21, the Kerala government had sharply increased its spending to 18% of its GSDP, to provide economic relief in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, aided by the relaxation in borrowing norms then. As ratios of GSDP, the Union government's transfers to Kerala declined to 2.8% in 2023-24, significantly lower than previous years, even as the State's own revenues remained at around 8.0%. This meant that, in 2023-24, the State government could meet its modest budget expenditure, equivalent to 14.2% of GSDP, only by raising the borrowing to 3.4% of the GSDP – which, however, would cross the borrowing limit set by the Centre (Chart 4).

The Supreme Court has now referred Kerala's plea for additional borrowing to a Constitution Bench.

A case for more government spending

For Kerala to translate its enormous advantage in the social sphere to advances in domestic income creation, there need be more – not less – government spending.

Especially so on higher education and research that will help build a facilitative environment for a knowledge-driven economy. Given the current state of federal fiscal relations, such an increase in government spending can occur only with greater market borrowings.

A large part of the government borrowing in Kerala, as elsewhere in India, is from domestic financial institutions, including public sector banks and insurance companies, which mobilise savings from the wider public. Kerala is a region with a large reserve of private savings, which could be channelled for productive purposes.

The concerns about debt-financed government expenditures are often exaggerated. Economists in the Keynesian tradition have shown that government borrowing can generate a virtuous cycle if the borrowed resources are deployed effectively to create new incomes and jobs. Many of the development dilemmas that Kerala faces today – an ageing population, the large outgo for pensions, outmigration of its youth – are problems that most other States will also face in the coming years. The Union and the State governments should join hands to ward off these challenges. On its part, Kerala should be able to convince that its borrowing is part of a larger plan to rebuild the economy and not a firefighting exercise to meet immediate financing needs.

Jayan Jose Thomas is a Professor of Economics at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi.

A Union-State expenditure comparison

The RBI has categorised budgetary expenditures by the Union and the State governments as 'developmental' and 'non-developmental'. A look at these expenditures in different sectors over the years

A common issue: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and others during a protest against the Centre over distribution of Central funds to States, at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi on February 8. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Chart 1: The chart shows the developmental and social expenditures (revenue and capital) by the Union government and all State governments (combined) as percentages of GDP

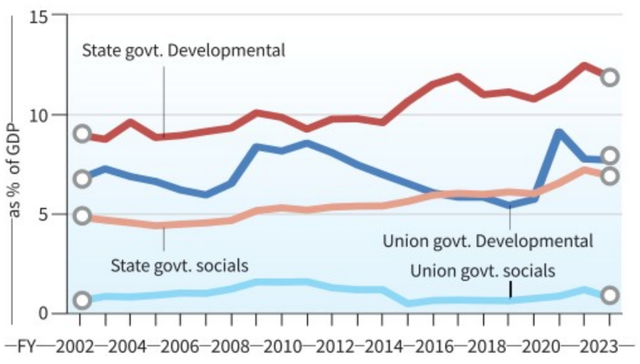
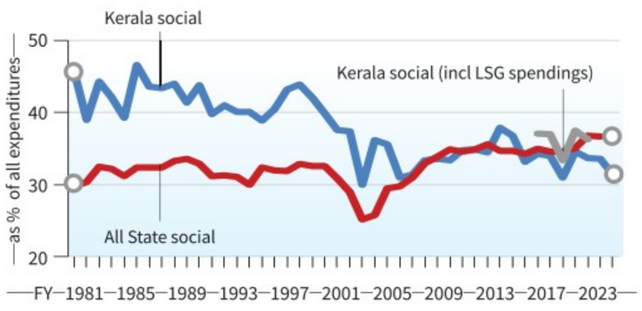
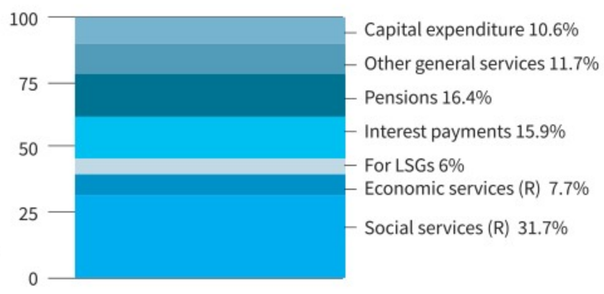


Chart 2: The chart shows the State government expenditures on social services as percentages of all budgeted expenditures (revenue and capital) for Kerala and for all Indian States (combined)



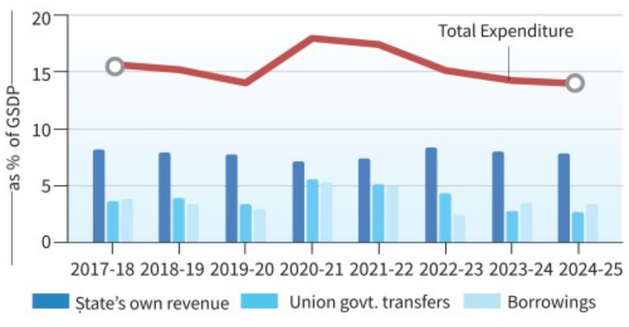
Source: The RBI and budget documents of Kerala

Chart 3: The chart shows the distribution (in %) of budgetary expenditures (revenue and capital) by the Government of Kerala in 2022-23



Source: Budget in Brief 2024-25, Department of Finance, Government of Kerala

Chart 4: The chart shows major sources of receipts and total budgetary expenditures (revenue and capital) of the Government of Kerala in 2022-23, as percentages of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)



Source: The RBI and budget documents of Kerala

THE GIST

In a recent development, the Government of Kerala has approached the Supreme Court for a resolution of the following question: how much can the State government borrow from the market to bridge the excess of its expenditures over receipts?

State governments receive funds from three sources: own revenues (tax and non-tax); transfers from the Union government as shares of taxes and as grants; and market borrowings.

The concerns about debt-financed government expenditures are often exaggerated. Economists in the Keynesian tradition have shown that government borrowing can generate a virtuous cycle if the borrowed resources are deployed effectively to create new incomes and jobs.

A loud and clear message to voters

The Election Commission is leaving no stone unturned to ensure a better polling percentage this time in Bengaluru, given its ignominy of having the poorest voter turnout. As part of the voting awareness campaign, the garbage collection vans of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike are going around with a recorded message urging people to ensure that they come to the booths on April 26 and exercise their franchise. The audio message says "Voter is king" and he/she should remember that one's "vote is not for sale". Despite multiple campaigns and initiatives to improve voter participation, Bengaluru in 2019 failed to buck the trend of low turnout. The average voter turnout, when the three constituencies were taken together, was just 54.2%.

A garbage collection van of the BBMP going around with a recorded message urging people in Bengaluru to vote.

Students' manifesto released

All-India Democratic Students' Organisation State committee on Wednesday released the 'Students' manifesto' ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

Among their demands is the withdrawal of the "undemocratically imposed" National Education Policy-2020 in the State and replacing it with a pro-people education policy". The manifesto sought allocation of 10% from the Union Budget and 30% from the State Budget for education and "ensuring scientific, secular, democratic, and free education for all". State secretary of AIDSO Ajay Kamath said there should be a stop to closing government schools in the name of mergers and more funds should be released to improve infrastructure in government schools and colleges.

> Due to the efforts of senior leaders of the party, all small differences of opinion are now settled. The BJP unit is now all set for a *dharma yuddha*.
>
> **R. ASHOK,**
> BJP leader

Liquor worth ₹10 lakh seized

The Excise Department on Wednesday seized 7,383 litres of Indian Made Liquor worth ₹10 lakh near KSBCL depot, Kengeri, Boddabele village in Bengaluru. Overall, the Election Commission has made seizures worth over ₹85.43 crore since March 16 when the model code of conduct came into force.

> The State submitted kharif drought report on Sept. 22, 2023, and an appeal on Oct. 9, but Amit Shah is claiming we delayed submitting a memorandum.
>
> **PRIYANK KHARGE,**
> Minister for IT

Reaching out: A file photo of actor Suresh Gopi, BJP candidate for Thrissur, interacting with members of the Kerala unit of the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha in Thrissur.

Now, parties in Kerala too try to woo Lingayats

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

The Veerashaiva-Lingayats, a politically dominant community in Karnataka, seems to be slowly attempting to become a player in the poll politics in neighbouring Kerala, with parties approaching community members ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. While politics in Kerala revolves largely around cadre-based parties, with the margin of victories becoming thin, community leaders acknowledge that they are being approached in this election more than any in the past.

In Karnataka, as many as nine Chief Ministers since the State's reorganisation in 1956 have been Veerashaiva-Lingayats, the highest among all castes, and the community's support is seen as crucial by both the BJP and the Congress in the State though the community is seen to be slanting towards the saffron party. In Kerala, since the merger of the Kerala Veerashaiva Sabha, which had about 20 sub-castes under its umbrella, with the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha in 2012, the community has organised itself.

"Never in the past did political parties approach the organisation as a poll outreach. This time, mahasabha office-bearers were invited to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he came to Thrissur," said Thrissur-based P.V. Suresh, mahasabha's central working committee member, representing Kerala.

The mahasabha claims that Veerashaiva-Lingayats population is around 15 lakh in Kerala with a presence in all districts. It estimates that in about 12 constituencies, including Alappuzha, Thrissur, Palakkad, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, and Malappuram, the community has upwards of about 50,000 votes. Mr. Suresh was among those who met Mr. Modi in Thrissur where BJP candidate and actor Suresh Gopi is contesting. Similarly, BJP candidate and State party president K. Surendran, who is pitted against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Wayanad, has approached mahasabha president P. Kunjumon while BJP candidate for Pathanamthitta Anil Anthony has taken part in the community activities, mahasabha sources confirmed.

To drum up support

Similarly, Congress leaders from Karnataka have also been working with the mahasabha to drum up support in key constituencies, including Alappuzha where general secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal is contesting and for Mr. Gandhi in Wayanad. The Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF government approved the State's grants in aid to an arts and science college in Pathanamthitta run by the community just before the model code of conduct came into effect.

"Except Kozhikode, where district committee is yet to be set up, we have well-organised district and grassroots units in all other districts," mahasabha Kerala unit president T.P. Kunjumon said. According to him, Veerashaiva-Lingayats form the fourth biggest organised caste group in Kerala. He said, "The mahasabha does not want to formally support any party."

Bengaluru-based mahasabha secretary H.M. Renukaprasanna said that the thin margin of victories had compelled political parties to consider organised communities such as Veerashaiva-Lingayats in Kerala though election process is not dictated much by money or caste consideration.

Amit Shah indicates that alliance of BJP with JD(S) is for the long haul

Leaders of the two parties to take up a joint tour of all the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies in the State going to the polls on April 26

POLITICAL PACT

B.S. Satish Kumar
BENGALURU

Apart from giving the final touches to the BJP's poll strategy, Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his visit to Karnataka on Tuesday is learnt to have indicated that the party's alliance with the JD(S) is for the long haul.

According to sources, Mr. Shah, who began his visit to the State by presiding over a meeting of the coordination committee of alliance partners, emphasised its importance in effectively reaching out to people.

'Resolve differences'

Making it clear that the alliance was not for short-term poll gains, he reportedly told leaders of both parties to resolve whatever differences there are between them and strengthen the alliance at all levels.

Acting on it, alliance leaders are set to take up a joint tour of all the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies that are going to the polls in the first phase in the State on April 26. Sources in the BJP said party veteran B.S. Yediyurappa, BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra and JD (S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy would be part of these visits.

Referring to the road-show taken out by Mr. Shah at Channapatna along with Mr. Kumaraswamy and Mr. Vijayendra, sources in the BJP said it was an instance of driving home a point that leaders of both the parties are united.

Hand in hand: Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Janata Dal (Secular) State president H.D. Kumaraswamy in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

Strained relations

The relations between the two parties had soured following the non-transfer of power to the BJP by its then ally JD(S) as per the prior agreement, after completing the 20-month rule in 2007, and they have not had any official tie-up for over 16 years. This had wider ramifications on the State political landscape as two major communities – Lingayats and Vokkaligas – were distributed among the two parties. This had an impact on political geography too as the BJP was struggling to make inroads in South Karnataka districts that have a dominant presence of Vokkaligas while the JD(S) was not a force to reckon with in most parts of North Karnataka where the Lingayat population is dominant.

Unity at all levels

In fact, the failure to find a strong political footing in southern areas of the State was seen as the reason for the BJP not being able to secure a simple majority in the Legislative Assembly. The BJP high command is now keen to ensure unity at all levels between the two parties to widen the political reach of the combine. To ensure this, Mr. Shah is believed to have told leaders to shun any "personal agenda". Mr. Shah is learnt to have got details about the combine's political position in each of the 14 Lok Sabha seats that are scheduled to go for the polls in the first phase.

Farmers say their plight amid drought has been ignored in electoral rhetoric

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

In an election season which has coincided with unprecedented heat and water stress due to monsoon failure, farmers across the board are unhappy over their issues being conspicuous by their absence in the political discourse panning out in the electoral arena.

In rural areas, the Congress is seen wooing the voters on five guarantee schemes coming as solace amid drought and the imperatives of "saving the Constitution". The BJP and the JD(S) too have nothing to offer to farmers and are highlighting the general "pace of growth" under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On the ground, the farmers are struggling to save whatever they can of the drying crops, with no rain and no water in irrigation canals.

This forced a section of farmers to come together in Mysuru on Wednesday and put forth demands seeking emphasis on key issues plaguing the agricultural sector and environment. Kurubur Shanthakumar of the Federation of State Farmers' Associations said that elections have become all about retaining power and key issues are not being addressed at all.

Climate change

The farmers' convention held in Mysuru drew a correlation between climate change and monsoon failure which had weakened the agricultural sector and pointed out that while water levels in the reservoirs were plummeting, the groundwater table had also depleted.

Hence, they said it was imperative to take stock of the emerging situation and focus on replenishing borewells, desilting waterbodies and augmenting their storage capacity so as to tide over such a situation in future.

"But politicians cutting across party lines are immersed in the election campaign while ignoring the plight of the farmers and even the officials are in the election mode as a result of which drought relief work has taken a back-seat," said Mr. Shanthakumar. The federation, whose representatives were part of the brainstorming session, said issues such as abrogation of the amendment to the APMC Act, enacting a law to make minimum support price for agricultural produce mandatory, loan waiver in a year of unprecedented drought, and higher compensation for crop loss suffered are some of the demands of the farmers which are not being addressed by political parties.

Putting forth demands: The Federation of State Farmers' Associations held a convention in Mysuru on Wednesday to highlight issues affecting the agricultural sector but have not found mention in the election campaign so far. M.A. SRIRAM

They want issues such as higher compensation for crop loss and minimum support price to be in focus

Resolution passed

While lakes have been encroached upon, green cover is also on the decline, all of which will have a negative bearing on the agricultural sector but political parties are ignorant of the connection, said the farmers who passed a resolution demanding that environment protection and plans to revive agriculture, replenish groundwater table, and revive and conserve rivers, etc. find a mention in the election manifestoes of all political parties.

Echoing similar sentiments, Shivaleela Misale, regional convener, Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatan, said in Belagavi, "The issue that needs immediate attention is drought and calamity relief. We demand that this should be automatic and not be subject to the discretion of the Union government. The States and district administration should have higher autonomy in this issue. This will speed up relief disbursal and expand the scope of relief measures, including alternative livelihood measures and cattle protection, other than just payment of compensation."

Shah calls off meeting with KSE after he reaches Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a curious development, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who had invited BJP rebel leader K.S. Eshwarappa to Delhi for consultations, called off the conciliatory meeting after the latter arrived in the national capital on Wednesday night.

This has provided a new twist to the ongoing episode of rebellion in the Karnataka unit of the BJP as Mr. Eshwarappa termed the cancellation of the meeting by Mr. Shah as an indication from the BJP high command that he should go ahead with his decision to take on veteran leader B.S. Yediyurappa's son B.Y. Raghavendra in the Lok Sabha election from Shivamogga.

"I received a call from Mr. Shah on Tuesday morning when he arrived in Bengaluru during which he invited me to Delhi to discuss in person the reasons for my rebellion. But after coming to Delhi, I got a call from his office stating that he is not available to meet me," Mr. Eshwarappa told mediapersons in Delhi.

"This means that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Shah want me to contest and defeat Mr. Raghavendra to teach a lesson to Mr. Yediyurappa who is practising politics of dynasty," maintained Mr. Eshwarappa, who has raised a banner of rebellion against the former Chief Minister after his son K.E. Kanthesh was denied party ticket to contest from the Haveri Lok Sabha constituency.

Mr. Eshwarappa, who had abided by the party central leadership's direction to desist from contesting the Assembly election in 2023, was hopeful that the party would reward him by giving the ticket to his son. Blaming Mr. Yediyurappa for his son missing out on the party ticket, he has declared that he would contest against Mr. Raghavendra in Shivamogga.

"I am returning to Shivamogga with the blessings of Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah to contest against Mr. Yediyurappa's son. I will win the polls and strengthen Mr. Modi's hands," Mr. Eshwarappa remarked.

> This means that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah want me to contest and defeat B.Y. Raghavendra to teach a lesson to B.S. Yediyurappa who is practising politics of dynasty
>
> **K.S. ESHWARAPPA,**
> former Minister

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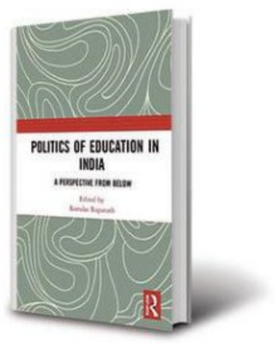
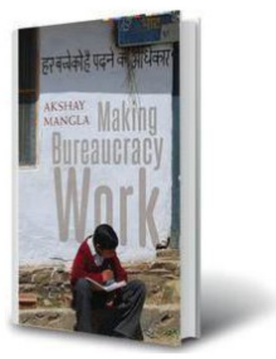
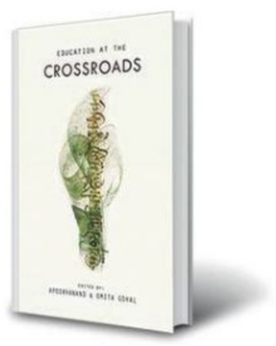
Accessible for all: Girls from a tribal community wash utensils after the mid-day meal at their school near the Lanjigarh area of Kalahandi district of Odisha. BISWARANJAN ROUT







Smaller citizens: how to bridge the gaps in India's education system

Writers explore the persistent hierarchy between social groups in education, and explain why Scheduled Tribes are still the most disadvantaged. They offer remedial measures, including the role of the bureaucracy in providing quality services at the local level

Sudipta Datta

In the Annual Status of Education Report, titled 'ASER 2023: Beyond Basics', released in January, a survey by civil society organisation Pratham among rural students aged 14 to 18 years found that more than half struggled with basic mathematics, a skill they should have mastered in Classes 3 and 4. The household survey conducted in 28 districts across 26 States assessed the foundational reading and arithmetic abilities of over 30,000 students and discovered that about 25% in this age group could not read a Class 2 level text in their vernacular. As they grew older, the rate of dropouts increased. While 3.9% of 14-year-olds were not in school, the figure climbed to 32.6% for 18-year-olds. Also, only 5.6% had opted for vocational training or other related courses. Subsequent surveys, including the recent India Employment Report 2024, prepared by the Institute for Human Development and the International Labour Organization, show that while access to education has improved for all social groups, "hierarchy between social groups persists; Scheduled Tribes are still the most disadvantaged."

In this backdrop, an important study on the unique problems being faced by one of the most marginalised communities of India, the Scheduled Tribes (STs), and what should be done is *Politics of Education in India: A Perspective from Below* (Routledge), edited by Ramdas Rupavath. In the Foreword, Werner Menski, Emeritus Professor of South Asian Laws SOAS, University of London, says the scenario where tribals remain doubly disadvantaged and that too many tribal children are still growing up without formal educational provisions renders the study relevant for policymakers and educationists. The ground realities vary from State to State, and "familiar problems persist when official perceptions of tribal educational backwardness seem to overlook the undeniable presence of sophisticated forms of traditional knowledge that might well be activated and productively included within educational provisions."

Local disconnect

Rupavath, in his Introduction, argues that education arrangements in India are not founded on the resident-driven standard. Rather, these seem to have been forced on them. "For instance, the training framework in India doesn't consider the local dialects of the tribals. Consequently, it is prompting only deficient improvement of the tribals." That said, he also stresses that education has brought a level of social portability for tribals. Divided in four sections, the book examines critical aspects of tribal communities from education, political participation, development issues, poverty, to the schemes in place to tackle the gap between the privileged and the downtrodden.

In his essay, Malli Gandhi focuses on the current needs of Adivasi children at all stages of school education. Transition rates from primary to upper primary and secondary school show significant dropouts, he writes, and the gender gap is high too. To improve the quality of education imparted to ST children, there needs to be "improvised pedagogy", instruction in the mother tongue and support materials in tribal dialects. "There needs to be synchronisation between school activities and lives of students," says Gandhi.

Working for the least advantaged

In his 2022 book, *Making Bureaucracy Work: Norms, Education and Public Service Delivery in Rural India* (Cambridge University Press), Akshay Mangla tries to find answers to these questions: how does the bureaucracy implement primary education in rural India, within the least likely settings? Why do some bureaucracies deliver education services more effectively than others? What makes the bureaucracy work for the least advantaged?

After more than two years of ethnographic field research in States like Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, he found that often informal rules guide public officials and their everyday relations with citizens, generating diverse ways of implementing policy and ensuring better outcomes. He illuminates the possibilities of the bureaucracy to promote inclusive development; and highlights the hurdles too.

The breathtaking expansion of primary schooling masks another disheartening trend, he notes, pointing out that "millions of children remain out of school, or receive services of abysmal quality, and are effectively denied education." He lists dilapidated school buildings, teacher absenteeism, dysfunctional classrooms, lack of monitoring and community engagement as some of the maladies afflicting primary education, whose impact can be seen in their employment prospects when they become adults.

In his book of essays, *Smaller Citizens: Writings on the Making of Indian Citizens* (Orient BlackSwan), Krishna Kumar highlights gender and other inequalities – sex, caste, rich/poor, urban/rural divide – that persist in education. Kumar writes about the poor-quality teaching in many village schools. Mangla argues that to implement quality services, bureaucracies need to solve complex problems and adapt to local needs, "which is best achieved when bureaucratic norms encourage robust deliberation."

In *Education at the Crossroads* (Niyogi Books), edited by Apoorvanand and Omita Goyal, the writers highlight the state of education on campuses around the country. "Clearly, we can see that far from being engines of transformation in our social relations, educational institutions are mostly unequal spaces in themselves," says Apoorvanand in his essay. "The story is similar if we look at schools, where children from the Scheduled Castes and Tribes still do not feel at home. Stories of villages boycotting schools with a Dalit cook, for instance, are not exceptions."

The fundamental challenge facing education today, says Apoorvanand, is to conceive and design all its elements in such a way as to realise its democratic potential. "In a highly unequal world such as ours, which has to deal with a societal mind in which inequality and discrimination are deeply ingrained, it would mean equal and equitable distribution of resources at all levels. Bypassing this question does not help."

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"A. Shanmugasundaram has sent the following taken from the condolence resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly on July 6,1991: "The House expresses its great awe and sorrow over the brutal assassination of Rajiv Gandhi... a leader with great stint to establish a stable government..." He wants to know whether 'awe' and 'stint' are correctly used."

"When we are in sorrow, we do not worry about correct usage. 'Awe' and 'stint' were compelled to perform a duty they were not used to and they tried their best. 'Awe' means 'reverential fear.'

He stood in awe of his teacher.

'Awe' means 'feeling of respect mixed with fear and/or wonder.' You may stand in awe of someone or something but you do not 'express' your 'awe.' 'Awe' is also used as a verb. It means 'to fill with awe'.

He was awed by the Himalayas.

'Awe-inspiring' means 'causing feelings of awe'.

The Brahmaputra in floods is an awe-inspiring sight.

'Awestruck' means 'suddenly filled with awe'.

I was awestruck when I learned about the terrible tragedy.

'Awful' originally meant 'awe-inspiring'. It is no longer used in that sense. It has two meanings now. One is 'very bad or unpleasant, terrible, shocking.'

It was an awful movie.

His behaviour was awful.

In informal contexts, 'awful' means 'very great'.

He has an awful lot of books.

'Awfully' means 'very' and is used in formal contexts.

He is awfully good.

It was an awfully bad dinner.

'Awesome' means 'causing awe'. When 'awful' started losing its original sense of 'awe-inspiring,' some writers started using 'awesome'. 'Awesome' is of Scottish origin. It was Sir Walter Scott who popularised the word.

To put the economy back on the rails is an awesome task.

I went to Kodaikanal from Madras last summer. The train journey was awful. But the stay in Kodaikanal was awfully good. I was struck by awe when I saw the Pillar Rocks in Kodaikanal. My friend thought the Perumal Hill was awesome. The hotel where we stayed had some awful people. Some used to come awfully late for breakfast and shout at the waiters. But the waiters never lost their temper. Two of them were awfully nice to every one.

'Stint' means 'to give too small an amount of food, aid, and the like.'

Eat what you want. Don't stint on the food. You are very weak.

She won't stint on butter.

'Stint' is used as a noun to mean 'fixed or limited amount or period of work.'

She did a two-year stint as a teacher.

You must do your stint at home.

'Without stint' means 'without limits, generously.'

She helped me without stint.

He gave me money without stint.

'Unstinting' means 'giving freely and generously.'

I was deeply touched by her unstinting praise of the work I had done."

Published in The Hindu on August 6, 1991.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) came into being on April 4, 1949. A quiz on the intergovernmental military alliance

Joan Sony Cherian

QUESTION 1

What is the motto of the alliance? From where was the motto taken from?

QUESTION 2

The North Atlantic Treaty was formed out of the expansion of two other treaties which came before it. One was signed in 1947 and the second one in 1948. Name the two treaties.

QUESTION 3

France left NATO's military command structure in 1966. In which year did it rejoin the structure?

QUESTION 4

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty states that any armed attack against one member of the alliance will be seen as an attack against all. When was this Article first invoked?

QUESTION 5

In 2019, this country, through an amendment, included the strategic goal of joining NATO in its Constitution. Name the country.

QUESTION 6

Article 6 of the Treaty states that Article 5 can be invoked by member states only when the attack is within certain territories. However, in 2003, NATO took charge of an armed mission outside the specified territories. Which was the territory? What did it take charge of?

Visual question:
This building houses the Ghana High Commission to the United Kingdom. What is its significance with respect to NATO? WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Rakesh Sharma blasted off into space from here. **Ans: Baikonur Cosmodrome in the then Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic**

2. The name of the orbital station where they docked and the number of days they stayed in space. **Ans: They spent 7 days, 21 hours, and 40 minutes aboard the Salyut 7**

3. The backup Indian cosmonaut to Rakesh Sharma. **Ans: Ravish Malhotra**

4. The Indian food Rakesh Sharma ate in space was prepared by this organisation. **Ans: Defense Food Research Lab in Mysuru**

5. Rakesh Sharma put his skills as a pilot to use till retirement here. **Ans: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited**

6. India became the _____ nation to send a person to space. **Ans: 14th**

7. The awards Rakesh Sharma won from India and the then USSR. **Ans: Ashok Chakra and Hero of the Soviet Union**

Visual: Rakesh Sharma told Indira Gandhi this when she asked how India looked from above. **Ans: 'Saare Jahan Se Achcha'**

Early Birds: Divas Kapur| K.N. Viswanathan| Rajmohan.V| Sanjana Veerabhadra| Jyot Prakash Gulati

Word of the day

Expiate:
make amends for

Synonyms: aby, atone

Usage: *She gave him a chance to expiate for the wrongs he did.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/expiatepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈɛk.spi.eɪt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Why a sweltering Bengaluru needs more than reactive measures to address heat-stress

Researchers from ATREE are trying to understand how heat interacts with multiple aspects of people's lives, and are collating information that would help people respond to the risks

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Clay water pots kept for sale in Bengaluru. PTI

On April 2, Bengaluru experienced the hottest day in April in the past three years, with the mercury levels touching 37.2 degrees Celsius. According to experts and weather forecasters, the city needs to brace itself for more, as there seems to be no respite from the sweltering heat any time soon.

Heat stress has been making significant impacts on individuals and communities of the city, threatening the livelihoods of the already vulnerable sections and upending various systems such as water supply, health, energy and more.

Given a relatively newer problem to Bengaluru, which was once known for its pleasant weather conditions throughout the year, the city's capacity to address heat-related challenges is almost non-existent, and the measures by the decision-makers often reactive.

A team of researchers from Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (ATREE) has been working on a project to understand the interactions of heat with different elements at a ward level and to bring together different types of information that would help to respond to the risks of heat-stress.

Mapping heat stress

"We wanted to communicate and discuss how heat, as a climate hazard, is connected to several different systems at the ward level and affects the stakeholders who live or work in the ward," says Dr. Manan Bhan, Fellow in Residence at ATREE.

The project titled 'Understanding Systemic Impacts of Heat Stress in Bengaluru' which commenced in Marappanapalya ward in North Bengaluru last year is being led by Bhan and Ujjvala Krishna, associate researcher at ATREE. It is funded by Bangalore Sustainability Forum.

"We wanted to focus on the ward level because that's where the impacts are often the most immediate. We felt it would be a useful way to bind our work spatially," says Bhan.

"This particular ward is also fairly unique as it has an industrial area, an APMC yard, run-of-the-mill commercial areas, low-income settlements, middle class apartment complexes and so on."

The team first used satellite data to map the green cover and found that areas with less green cover coincided with areas with highest temperature anomalies.

Then, the team identified the big systems such as health, water, energy, waste and mobility that impact lives and livelihoods in the ward, and the various stakeholders.

Agricultural produce are being covered to protect them from heat.

Gaps in adaptation strategies

"We tried to connect these two things to come up with a 'vulnerability matrix' to identify the people who might be most affected in this ward," explains Bhan.

In a heat perception survey that followed the team spoke to about 40 people who work or live in the ward to understand how they perceive heat stress and respond to it.

Heat stress being a relatively new problem to the city, there seems to be gaps in the way the problem is perceived by the authorities whose strategies are often marked by a lack of understanding of ground realities.

While Bhan points out that even within a particular neighbourhood incidents of heat are not uniform and the impact of heat not unidimensional, these differences often escape the adaptation strategies devised by the decision makers.

The heat advisories issued by several states and cities are often reactive in nature and often put the onus on individuals to take action, says Bhan.

Ujjvala Krishna further explains. "Many people still work in a system that's not used to changing for a particular individual. Last year during the summer, the Pourakarmika union asked to change their timing from 6 am-2 pm to 6 am-11 am, but it was denied. Through our work, we've been able to understand that it was denied because the rest of the system can't adapt to it."

Cascading effect

"Similarly, whether a security guard can change their work timings would depend on whether their workplace - a factory or an office - would change its timings, which is then dependent on the people who live or work there changing their timings. So, it becomes a cascading effect. It has to change across all systems and sectors. It can't change in isolation, and that's the biggest thing we realized."

Krishna notes that there also is a challenge with the understanding of a heatwave at the ground level which reflects in the responses of authorities to heat in the city.

"The IMD says that temperature should be 4.5 degrees above the average temperature for that time to consider it a heat wave. But in urban areas because of the urban heat island effect, the temperature ends up being 3 or 4 degrees above the normal temperature recorded. But weather stations record from areas that are generally cooler. Also, factors like humidity and real-feel temperature are not accounted for."

Ujjvala Krishna

Manan Bhan

The project aims to eventually bring such findings to the attention of decision-makers and advocate for the need to look at the problem of heat in a systemic manner.

From climate walk to advocacy

The immediate outcome of the ongoing project has been a climate vulnerability walk.

"We were wondering what the best and most scalable way was to communicate our findings to people, something which could be replicated for other hazards or in other wards of the city. So, we came up with this idea of a climate vulnerability walk," says Bhan.

"It lasts for about 1.5 hours and we stop at 7-8 checkpoints in the ward to talk about specific things, specific systems and their relationship to heat. For example, we stop at the yard and talk about the relationship between heat, agriculture and the food system."

The participants are encouraged to map out what they perceive as vulnerabilities, boundaries and stakeholders, and this is followed by a discussion.

Forms of engagement

The team which is planning to conduct the walk every couple of months is also considering other forms of engagements such as games, collaborations, and building climate education tool kits for children and youngsters from lower income settlements.

"Those would be immediate goals. And then we will try to figure out ways to pursue advocacy, and to understand what it takes to move the needle."

Only 22% of unicorns were started by solopreneurs: Report

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In the last decade, 22 per cent of Indian unicorns were started by solopreneurs as compared to two or more co-founders leading the other 78 per cent, according to an analysis by PrivateCircle Research.

40% of these solopreneurs have started fintech unicorns including CRED, Slice, GoDigit Insurance, Acko and others. Bengaluru was the most preferred headquarters location for solopreneurs of the last decade.

The data suggests a higher win rate for startups with two or more founders. PrivateCircle found that Indian unicorns, on average, have two founders. Further, the average revenue generated by co-founder unicorns ₹2,909 crore was found to be 32% more than the average revenue of solo founder unicorns ₹2,196 crore. This is based on the latest revenue numbers available for each company, said a press release.

The research also observed variation in central tendencies of both groups, indicating that on average co-founder led companies raise more funding than solopreneurs. For the uninitiated, Central Tendency is the statistical measure that represents the single value of the entire distribution or a dataset.

However, some solopreneur-led unicorns have managed to raise large funding rounds especially from Bangalore. Additionally, six unicorns led by solopreneurs have successfully launched their IPOs, while seven unicorns led by founding teams have been listed on the stock exchange.

Dr. Murali Loganathan, Director of Research at PrivateCircle said, "The founding team size dilemma is one of the oldest dilemmas faced by startup founders. Ultimately, the choice depends on the individual's temperament, goals, and the specific dynamics of the venture they are embarking upon. Variation in central tendencies of both the groups indicates that investors prefer co-founder led companies. It can also be a function of co-founders being able to tap a larger network of contacts."

C-CAMP develops new OptiDrop platform to study single cells

The novel microfluidic chip-based platform allows for optical sensing of biological samples without the expensive open space, and bulky optical components routinely used in microscopy

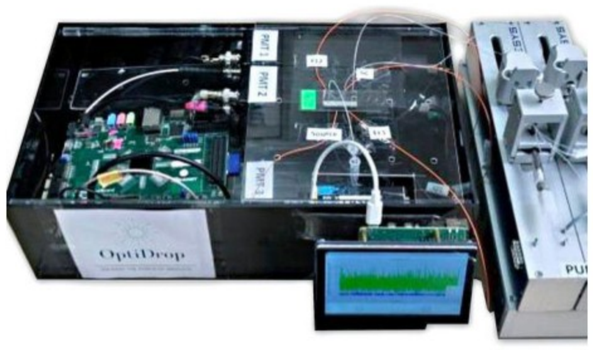
The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) in Bengaluru has developed a new platform that makes it easier and cheaper to study single cells.

Named OptiDrop, the platform has potential applications in diagnostics, therapeutics, agriculture, and animal health. The novel microfluidic chip-based platform allows for optical sensing of biological samples without the expensive open space, and bulky optical components routinely used in microscopy and flow cytometry-based techniques.

This innovation, developed by C-CAMP's Discovery to Innovation Accelerator team enables the study of single cells encapsulated in droplets with ease and precision.

"Traditional flow cytometers, used for fluorophore-based biomarker detection, are limited by high costs, bulkiness, and larger sample volume requirements, often restricting their usage to few hospitals, research or diagnostic labs. Optidrop will have game-changing downstream applications, including studying the impact on individual cells during a drug screen, environment control (water contamination counter), detection and sorting of CAR-T cells in immuno-oncotherapeutics, selection of CRISPR-modified single cells and selection of high-efficiency clones in single-cell genomics," said Dr. Taslimarif Saiyed, CEO and Director of C-CAMP and one of the lead authors of the paper.



OptiDrop is developed using a proprietary microfluidic chip with integrated optical fibres photomultiplier tubes and a pulse counter.

It enables the study of single cells encapsulated in droplets with ease and precision

How it work

The team, consisting of researchers from C-CAMP and IIT-Madras, developed OptiDrop using a proprietary microfluidic chip with integrated optical fibres, photomultiplier tubes and a pulse counter. As each droplet flows through the microfluidic channel lit by an incident beam, light is scattered from its surface and contents. The platform detects fluorescent signals associated with the individual droplet. The output or signals are captured, processed and read live through an in-house developed software.

How much does it cost?

Flow cytometers currently available in the market can cost anywhere between ₹45 lakhs and ₹1 crore. OptiDrop setup costs only about ₹10 lakh and depending on the requirements of the application, the cost of light sources, detectors and pumps can be reduced by replacing these components with lower-cost alternatives for larger-scale production.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 4, 1974

Planned Development of Forest Wealth in Kerala

Bangalore, April 3: The Flood and Forest Minister, Mr. K.H. Patil told the Karnataka Assembly, to-day that the forest wealth of the State was being developed in a planned way and in the next seven or eight years, the area under forests would be considerably increased by the afforestation schemes now under implementation.

The Minister, who was answering questions on revenue, from forests in the State pointed out that the Government was strictly following the policy of not releasing any Forest land for cultivation. He said the revenue from forests which was Rs. 14 crores in 1969-70 had gone up to Rs. 20 crores.

No Interference With Steel Misuse Probe: Urs

Bangalore, April 3: The Chief Minister, Mr. D.Devaraj Urs asserted in the Karnataka Assembly that there was no room for any interference in the enquiry being conducted by the Vigilance Commission into the allegations of misuse of cement and steel meant for two Harijan hostels in Bangalore. The enquiry was proceeding satisfactorily, he added.

He also decried the tendency to look at everything with suspicion and appealed to the members not to adopt that attitude.

The Chief Minister was intervening when two members, messers S. Bangarappa (Ind) and H.T. Krishnappa (Cong O), wanted to move an adjournment motion on the enquiry into the alleged misuse of steel and cement.

Maneesh Verma: '*Jump* is about nihilism versus existentialism'

Theatre actor, writer, producer Maneesh Verma brings a dark comedy, *Jump*, written and directed by him, which he says looks at death from different perspectives

Shilpa Anandraj

Saying it as it is Maneesh Verma (below) and stills from *Jump*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

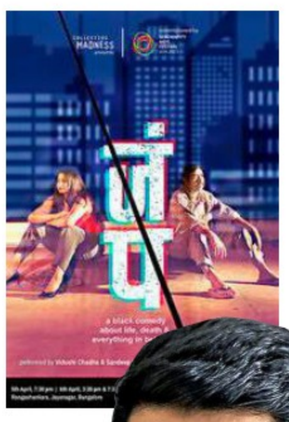
Mental health and suicide –words that can trigger fear in the heart. Despite there being a rise in depression and self harm, not everyone is forthcoming in talking about it or seeking help. The fear of rejection and social stigma keeps them from speaking up. Actor, director, producer, Maneesh Verma, wants to propagate mental well-being, make people laugh about their fears and encourage them to seek help. This, he does with what he knows best – theatre.

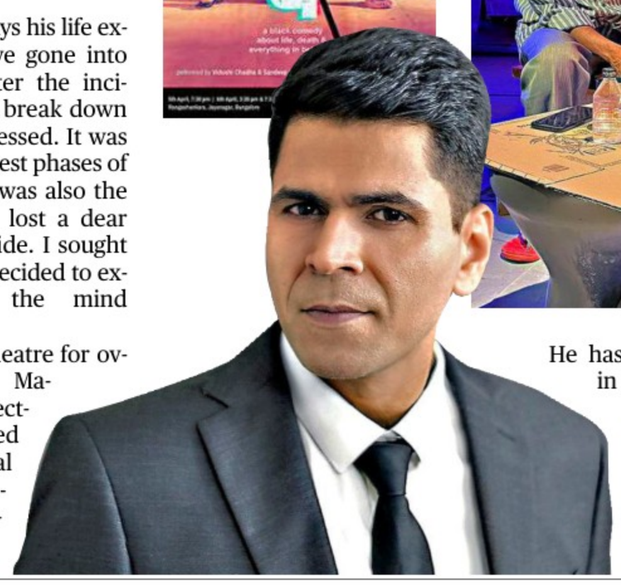
The NSD graduate has written and directed a dark comedy, *Jump,* which he says looks at death from the perspectives of the two major characters on stage.

"*Jump* is a black comedy that talks about life, death and everything in between. It tackles suicide, depression, and mental health, and navigates through these issues with a delicate balance between humour and sensitivity, sparking essential conversations and promoting awareness," explains Maneesh over a call from Mumbai.

The story, Maneesh says, revolves around a successful woman executive, who wishes to end her life by jumping off a roof. She is saved in the nick of time by a cab driver. This sets the stage for a collision between two completely opposite worlds, characters, circumstances, beliefs, and perspectives. The actors on stage will be Sandeep Shikhar from Bengaluru and Vidushi Chadha from Mumbai.

The play, Maneesh says, comes from a personal space. "I am a mountaineer and was in UttarKashi in October 2022 as part of an advanced mountaineering course. We were a batch of 53 people and we lost 29 to an avalanche. I somehow survived and that changed my life. I was left with a lot of questions and those emotions led me to explore the concept of death."





Maneesh says his life experiences have gone into the play. "After the incident, I would break down and was depressed. It was one of the lowest phases of my life. That was also the time, when I lost a dear friend to suicide. I sought therapy and decided to explore how the mind works."

Active in theatre for over 25 years, Maneesh has directed, produced musicals, social dramas, comedy and children's plays. He has also acted in films such as *Yodha, Gunajn Saxena, Dhadak* and web series such as *Ajeeb Daastan* and *Typewriter*.

The play uses humour to make people aware about their mental well-being and encourage them to seek help, Maneesh says. "The intention is to spread awareness of how the mind works. Sometimes even people closest to the sufferer has no idea what is going on in their minds. We think actors are great at acting, but I have come to believe that people are the greatest actors in life. They mask their emotions and feelings expertly from their closest friends and family."

The executive in the play opens up to a stranger, Maneesh says as she feels he may be less judgemental.

Death is explored through the two characters – a well-to-do woman who feels she has nothing to live for and a less-privileged man, who lost his father to suicide and is left with the burden of clearing family debts. "*Jump* is about nihilism versus existentialism. When one is existing, they cannot even think of ending their life."

Maneesh admits suffering from survivor's guilt. "I do not believe in god or luck. It was hard for me to understand why I had survived. My core beliefs were shaken and I felt there was no control over death. Suddenly, I looked at life and nature as being random. Nature does not think who is good or bad, old or young."

The characters in *Jump* seek help from therapists and quacks, says Maneesh. "That is where the dark humour comes from." Maneesh founded his production company, Collective Madness Studios in 2004. "It is a platform for anyone who believes that theatre is a practicing art form."

Jump was commissioned and premiered at the Serendipity Arts Festival in December 2023. It was also staged at Rangayana Theatre Festival, Mysuru.

Jump *in English and Hindi, will be staged at Rangashankara on April 5 (7.30pm) and 6 (3.30pm and 7.30 pm) and at Bangalore International Centre on April 8. It is open to people aged 15 years and above. Tickets on BookMyShow and at the venue.*

CITYBEATS

Into the world of Dahl

APRIL 7
Explore Roald Dahl's *Matilda* at this workshop by SkilLit Readers. It is an interactive workshop, tailored for children aged between eight and 13. It will include music, writing and role-play. Tickets are priced at ₹1200 per child and only 12 spots are available.
At Atta Galatta, 1.30pm. Call 9632510126.

Ramzan sweets

ONGOING
On the occasion of Ramzan, Anand Sweets has introduced a range of baklavas, premium quality dry fruits and mithais. The baklavas are hand crafted and come in the options of mixed dry fruit and baklava tarts. There are also bulbul kunafa, baklava fingers and baklava mix bukaj among others.
Available online, Anand outlets, Swiggy/Zomato

Summer specials

APRIL 8 TO MAY 3
Unalome Project launches a summer camp for children. Called Rang Tarang, it is inspired by the philosophy of Tagore, Vivekananda, and Krishnamurti. It is open to children aged between five and 10. Fee is ₹24000.
At Chimply Fun Pre-school, OMBR, Banaswadi. Visit info@unalomeproject.com

Actions speak louder Cinematographer Antony Samson on set in Mongolia. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Miming in Mongolia

Shilpa Nair Anand

When cinematographer Antony Samson got a chance to shoot in Mongolia, he was excited. What he did not factor in was being the only English speaker on a crew which barely knew any English and using hand gestures to explain camera angles or the light positions. "Until I went there, Mongolia meant Genghis Khan to me!"

The 10-episode web series he shot, *Pictures of Murder* (English title), directed by Dorjsuren Shadav, is streaming on a Mongolian OTT platform VOO.

"There were times when I was tempted to quit and return home. But, I knew, I would regret it if I did," says Antony, 29. Since there are no daily flights to India, it made staying easier. He admits that he had no clue about what he was getting into when a friend told him of a Mongolian producer, Mungunzul Amgalanbaatar, looking for a cinematographer from the South Indian film industry.

"Mungunzul, who is also an actor, knows director Anil Kumar. She, with her husband, Dorjsuren, had been to Alappuzha and visited Anil Kumar. He was supposed to direct a film starring her as the lead. She is familiar with South Indian films, maybe that is why she wanted a cinematographer from here," Antony adds.

Antony who studied cinematography at the LV Prasad Film Institute, Chennai, has been assistant director for films such as *Darwinte Parinamam*, *Sethum Aayiram Pon*, *Thumbaa* and *Bheeshma Parvam*. He is now an independent ad film maker based in Bengaluru; he is in discussions for his next film project as cinematographer. *Pictures of Murder* is his first as an independent cinematographer.

He did not set out alone, he took an assistant from Chennai when he headed out to Ulaanbaatar. "Unfortunately, a month in, he had to return home due to a family emergency. So it was only me then, for close to a month," he says. Google Translate was not of much help either, especially on the set because he had to find translations of technical terms pertaining to filming.

"It is difficult trying to communicate camera angles without a language or rather a smattering of one. I had some reference shots saved on my phone, which I would show the director and I would get the idea across."

He calls not being able to converse with another human being (aside from phone calls) "a different experience." That is not to say he has not picked up any Mongolian. "The Mongolian for black cloth is *khar daavu* that I learnt because we needed it to cover the windows."

The experience has toughened him, he jokes, "I can now do anything. Even build a rocket and go into outer space!"

Chronicles of a musical journey

Ranjani Govind

To her long list of achievements, including being the 2024 recipient of the Panchakshari Gavai Rashtreeya Prashasti from the Karnataka Government, vocalist Nagamani Srinath can now add author. On her 74th birthday, which falls on April 7, Nagamani will release her autobiography, *Antaraalada Alaapane (Song of the Soul)*.

Published by the Jnana Deepika Educational Trust in Bengaluru, the book recounts the first part of her musical journey. "I still can't believe I wrote a book! I never thought I would compile my musical experiences. I am indebted to my well-wishers who insisted I put them together for posterity's sake," says Nagamani.

Born in Jodi Gubbi village in Hassan district to Sanskrit and Kannada school teachers GN Narayana and Venkatalakshamma, Nagamani was sent to Mysore to continue her music studies when she was just seven years old.

"My mother had observed me singing from the age of five and was determined that I take lessons when my voice was still malleable. Arekere Narayana Rao was my first guru, and in two years, he had me take the stage at the Trimurthi Jayanthi Utsava in Mysore when one of the performers could not make it," she recollects.

A life well lived Vocalist Nagamani Srinath. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

That set the ball rolling for Nagamani and soon, she was singing alongside leading artistes of the early 1960s such as Violin Mahadevappa, Mridanga VS Rajagopal and Ghata MA Krishnamurthy.

Word got around and before long, she was performing in and around Mysore, Mandya, Madikeri, Bengaluru and parts of North Karnataka. When she graduated with music as one of her subjects, she bagged a Central Government Scholarship to study music in Chennai.

The 20-year-old became the disciple of yesteryear doyen Ramnad Krishnan.

"Every day was a new experience as the contours of my learning expanded and I saw all my lessons in a newer light and fresher perspectives. For my post graduate diploma in music at Central College of Carnatic Music it was not only my guru Ramnad Krishnan, but also stalwarts such as TN Krishnan, Palghat KV Narayanaswamy, TM Tyagarajan and Paroor Anantharaman, who were part of the visiting faculty, who mentored me. I was also fortunate to receive advanced lessons from DK Jayaraman, Veena R Visweshwaran and Gowrie Kuppuswamy."

Lessons and inspirations

While violinist Lalgudi Jayaraman instilled the value of *sadhane* (practice) to help her voice maintain precision, Nagamani's muse was ML Vasanthakumari, who had by then, noticed Nagamani. However, she says the words of Ramnad Krishnan are what she lives by: The intricacies of rendition are what makes them classical.

"My guru believed that the pursuit of formula and tradition in following the idioms of classical music should not be a stifling of progression. Your inventive abilities are in adapting to modern requisites," she says.

Nagamani not only performed at concerts, but also produced albums. She has tuned hundreds of *dasara padas*, as well as composed 200 pieces with *varna, kriti* and *tillana* that are now used in music and dance platforms. "What I consider my best contribution towards disseminating Carnatic music is the Gurukula Series – an audio-visual production of over 500 hours of music for students to use as a learning tool. Available on YouTube and as DVDs, the 20-year process has been a labour of love for me," says Nagamani.

Amongst the most notable awards to her credit are the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Karnataka Rajyothsava Award, Chandana National Award, Karnataka Ganakala Bhushana, Academy of Music's Chowdiah National award, Gayana Samaja's Gana Kalashri and the Best Teacher Award from the Karnataka Government.

"All those I revere in the Carnatic world including MLV, Lalgudi Balamurali Krishna and Ramnad Krishnan told me that a good musician is one who takes music forward to students. I was often reminded that whoever cannot teach well was not a good musician. Among the large numbers I have trained, nearly a hundred are performers today in many parts of the globe," she says.

(Antaraalada Alaapane *will be released on April 7, 10am, at Babburkamme Seva Samithi, 17, Seshadri Road, Gandhi Nagar. Call 98451 19995 for details)*

4 killed in blast at drug manufacturing unit in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Four persons were killed when a chemical reactor blew up inside SB Organics Limited, a bulk drugs manufacturing company, in Hathnoora mandal of Telangana's Medak district on Wednesday.

Officials feared that the death toll is likely to go up as 14 injured workers were shifted to a private hospital and seven to the Sangareddy Area Hospital.

Officials from the fire department said the fire was chemical in nature and was triggered by an explosion inside the factory.

The Sangareddy police said that there were no eyewitnesses to the explosion and that a probe was ordered to ascertain the exact cause of fire. A case was booked by the police.

The drug manufacturing factory where a chemical reactor blew up. MOHD ARIF

Narsapur MLA P. Sunitha Laxma Reddy said there was a blast in one reactor. The workers, who found a leakage in the reactor first switched off the power supply and then stopped oil supply. While they were in the process of disconnecting power to the other reactors, there was a deafening sound followed by a blast in the reactor.

After roadshow, Rahul files papers for Wayanad LS seat

Congress MP says problems faced by the district will be solved if Congress gets a majority in the poll; he will be contesting against BJP Kerala president K. Surendran and CPI leader Annie Raja

E.M. Manoj
KALPETTA

Following a massive roadshow in Wayanad, the incumbent MP Rahul Gandhi filed his nomination papers for the Lok Sabha election on Wednesday.

Braving the scorching heat, Mr. Gandhi, accompanied by Congress general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and K.C. Venugopal and senior United Democratic Front leaders, rode in an open vehicle decked with the slogan "For India along with Rahul".

The police and security agencies had a tough time controlling the mob as thousands of people had assembled in the town.

Reaching out: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi takes out a roadshow in the Wayanad constituency on Wednesday.

The roadshow was taken out around 11.40 a.m.

Mr. Gandhi said he was proud to be a parliament member of Wayanad and appreciated the love and affection shown to him by the public. He could see the unity of the people in Wayanad when a landslip occurred at Puthumala in the district, a few months after the 2019 election.

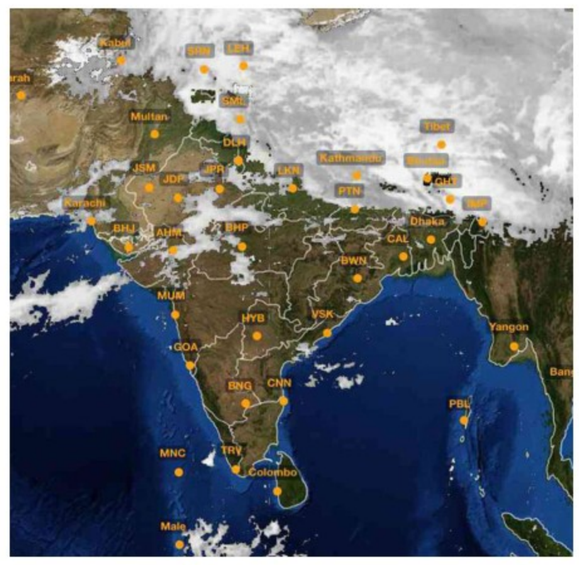
There are many issues in the district such as the night traffic ban on the Karnataka parts of the Kozhikode-Kollegal National Highway 766 and Mananthavadi-Mysore State Highway, recurring man-animal conflict and a dearth of medical care facilities to be resolved, Mr. Gandhi said, adding that all the issues would be sorted out if the Congress got a majority in the upcoming poll.

Mr. Gandhi submitted his papers to Wayanad District Collector and District Chief Election Officer Renu Raj around 1.15 p.m.

Mr. Rahul will be contesting against BJP State president K. Surendran and CPI leader Annie Raja. He had won the seat in 2019 with a margin of over four lakh votes.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam and Meghalaya. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Sikkim, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep. Heat wave conditions likely at isolated places over Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and north interior Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	35.5	26.4	Kozhikode	—	37.8	28.9
Ahmedabad	—	38.0	23.2	Kurnool	—	42.7	29.0
Aizawl	27	33.0	17.1	Lucknow	—	36.1	18.7
Allahabad	—	40.7	19.8	Madurai	—	39.5	27.1
Bengaluru	—	36.6	24.3	Mangaluru	—	34.8	26.2
Bhopal	—	38.5	22.0	Mumbai	—	33.2	22.5
Bhubaneswar	—	36.8	26.8	Mysuru	—	36.9	21.0
Chandigarh	—	34.6	15.5	New Delhi	—	36.6	17.3
Chennai	—	38.2	25.7	Patna	—	38.0	22.6
Coimbatore	—	38.4	26.7	Port Blair	—	32.6	24.7
Dehradun	—	31.8	16.4	Puducherry	—	35.6	27.5
Gangtok	—	20.1	13.4	Pune	—	39.7	21.9
Goa	—	33.0	24.5	Raipur	—	40.5	25.7
Guwahati	—	32.2	20.0	Ranchi	—	36.6	20.5
Hubballi	—	39.0	23.0	Shillong	—	25.6	14.3
Hyderabad	—	39.6	27.2	Shimla	—	25.6	12.0
Imphal	2	29.7	17.5	Srinagar	—	17.1	8.0
Jaipur	—	35.8	23.2	Thiruvananthapuram	8	34.0	26.6
Kochi	—	33.2	28.0	Tiruchi	—	39.7	28.4
Kohima	—	26.0	12.4	Vijayawada	—	37.1	26.2
Kolkata	—	37.9	27.6	Visakhapatnam	—	32.2	27.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	4	47	.10	186	159	
Bengaluru	.10	17	.24	110	136	
Chennai	8	8	.96	62	63	
Delhi	.27	.96	.61	247	263	
Hyderabad	4	.32	.48	74	122	
Kolkata	.15	.33	.25	127	112	
Lucknow	.10	9	.50	90	120	
Mumbai	9	.67	.10	164	140	
Pune	.92	116	112	40	40	
Visakhapatnam	.13	.38	.40	58	112	

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 303 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 18

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Three freed Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convicts sent back to Sri Lanka

C. Jaisankar
TIRUCHI

Three Sri Lankan nationals convicted in the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassination case – Murugan alias Sriharan, Robert Payas, and Jayakumar – who were prematurely freed from prison and then detained at a special camp in Tiruchi, were deported to Sri Lanka on Wednesday.

Sources said that on receipt of the final clearance from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to send them back to Sri Lanka, the Revenue Department, which runs the special camp, released them on Tuesday night. They were taken to Chennai, in a police vehicle, under tight security. They left for Sri Lanka around 10 a.m. by a Sri Lankan Airlines flight from Chennai.

An advocate, P. Pugazhendi, who facilitated their release from the special camp by submitting the required documents, also accompanied them to Sri Lanka.

Though Tamil Nadu's Department of Home and the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer, Chennai, had approved the release of Murugan, Robert Payas, and Jayakumar a few weeks ago, they could not be released immediately as they did not have travel documents. The Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner in Chennai issued Emergency Travelling Certificate (ETC), a one-time travel document, on March 25 to all of them.

Tiruchi Collector M. Pradeep Kumar told *The Hindu* that after the receipt of all travel documents and the landing permission, Murugan, Robert Payas, and Jayakumar were released from the special camp.

The three had been among four Sri Lankan nationals lodged in the special camp in the Tiruchi Central Prison complex since November 12, 2022, after the Supreme Court ordered their release. Santhan alias Suthendiraraja, who was released a few weeks ago from the special camp, died of ill health at the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital in Chennai on February 21.

The sources said Nalini, one of the freed convicts and the wife of Murugan, visited him at the special camp two days ago. The wife of Robert Payas and the family members of Jayakumar also met them at the camp and collected their belongings.

Sri Lankan Member of Parliament and general secretary of the Tamil National People's Front Selvarajah Kajendren told *The Hindu* that the three freed convicts emerged out of the Bandaranaike International Airport in the evening, hours after their flight landed.

Earlier, the MP said the three remained inside the airport for over four hours since their flight landed and it appeared that they were detained for questioning.

After they came out, Mr. Kajendren said the three would head to Jaffna in the Northern Province.

Khan clears appointment of former Kerala CJ as SHRC head

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan has approved the appointment of retired Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court S. Manikumar as State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) chairperson.

Nevertheless, the government must move the Election Commission of India to ratify the appointment, given the prevalence of the model code of conduct.

Mr. Khan's reluctance to give assent to the controversial appointment had been a sore point between the Raj Bhavan and the government, along with other issues such as "belatedly" sending crucial Bills for Presidential assent.

The Left Democratic Front had accused Mr. Khan of stalling the Assembly's legislative prerogative by not signing Bills passed by the

S. Manikumar

House into law and sending several for the Rashtrapathi Bhavan's reference after procrastinating for years.

Mr. Khan had also overruled Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan's resistance to Mr. Manikumar's appointment. In an objection note sent to the government in 2023, Mr. Satheesan alleged that Mr. Manikumar's actions as Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court had raised the question of whether he could discharge his duty as SHRC chairperson in a nonpartisan and just manner. Mr. Satheesan had alleged a conflict of interest in the government hosting an official send-off for the outgoing Chief Justice. Mr. Satheesan said the Leader of the Opposition was a panel member mandated to select a person to the sensitive top post. The Chief Minister and the Speaker were the other two permanent members. He alleged that the government forsook the political propriety of keeping the Leader of the Opposition in the loop and arbitrarily decided on an individual they liked.

The government submitted no panel of candidates to the selection committee to make an informed choice. Instead, it chose to present a single name in the meeting. "The government action is anti-democratic, arbitrary and pregnant with political intrigue," he had said.

Politically influential castes get lion's share

G.V.R. Subba Rao
VIJAYAWADA

Candidates from the Reddy, Kamma and Kapu communities have secured the most number of nominations to unreserved seats for the forthcoming Assembly election in Andhra Pradesh, as indicated by the seat allocation by the ruling YSR Congress Party and the National Democratic Alliance comprising the Telugu Desam Party, BJP and Jana Sena Party.

The A.P. Assembly has 175 seats, of which 29 are reserved for SCs and seven for STs. Of the remaining 139 unreserved seats, the YSRCP and NDA have earmarked over 80 seats for the Reddy, Kamma and Kapu communities.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Project Organisation
E-Tender Notice No. T-SG-Proj-2024-2 dt. 02.04.2024

For and on behalf of The President of India, The Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Project, Tiruchchirappalli-620 001 invites E-Tender for the following works:

Sl. No.	Tender No	Name of work
1.	T-SG-Proj-2024-2 dt. 02.04.2024	"PROVISION OF POWER SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT FOR EMBEDDED PC AND VDU AS PER RDSO TAN AT EI STATIONS OVER SOUTHERN RAILWAY" for Implementing e-office and other applications.

Sl. No.	Cash Value (Approx.) (₹)	Earnest Money Deposit ₹	Cost of Tender Documents (₹)	Last Date for Receipt of Tender	Completion period
1.	8,55,48,515.00/-	5,77,800/-	NIL	25.04.2024 14.00 Hrs.	12 months

Note: The detailed terms and conditions and other details have already been uploaded in the website (www.ireps.gov.in)
Dy.Chief Signal & Telecom. Engineer, (Projects)

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2
E-Tender Notice No.: FOIS_TISCO_SAIL_CSDR Dated : 01-04-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Item of work	Approx. Value
Provision of FOIS network connectivity for TISCO & SAIL Siding at Channasandra station over Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 10,01,845.79

Last date for submission of bids : Upto 13:00 Hrs. on 24-04-2024
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/ Bengaluru
PUB/02/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2
E-Tender Notice No. : DDHI_PAVAGADA_TK_URU Dated : 22-03-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tender for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Provision of OFC and 6 Quad Cable (14.850 Kms) based communication system in Doddahalli-Pavagada & Tumakuru-Urukere (11 km.) section and supply and installation of IP-MPLS System at two stations at Urukere & Pavagada stations of South Western Railway.	Rs. 2,50,76,468.09

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 11.00 Hrs. on 16-04-2024
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom. Engineer Construction, Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/03/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

DOCUMENT LOST
This is to inform the general public that I have lost the notarized GPA document dated 27-03-1997 given by Mr. S M Kalleshaiah to Mrs. Srimathi in respect of site No 132 and 133 formed in Sy no 108, Kodigehalli Village, Yeshwantpur Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk during shifting of my house. I have lodged a lost report with NO- 0999941/2024on 02-04-2024 at Vyalikaval Police Station in this regard. If any person/s finds the document, please return it to the below-mentioned address:
Affidavit No: IN-KA73344778643921W
ASHOK KUMAR .M
#10/1, 5th Main Road,
Palace Guttahalli, Bangalore-560003.
Mob: 9844088864

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule Property from its owner **Smt.Shanthi P.** W/o Sri.Narasimhan Palani, residing at: No.375, Flat No.5, Chandrahasa Complex, 5th Main, 13th Cross, Sadashivanagar, Bangalore – 560080.

Apart from the said owner, if any other person/s have any manner of claim or interest or demand over the Schedule property or any part thereof by way of sale, lease, mortgage, gift, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, pre-emption or otherwise howsoever, they are hereby requested to file their objection/s (along with the photocopies of the documents on which they are relying), with the undersigned within **14 days** from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of industrial property bearing Municipal No.C-21, PID No.C-21, measuring East to West 23.40 Mtrs., and North to South 16.50 Mtrs., in all measuring 386.10 Sq.Mtrs., with an industrial shed thereon measuring 168.70 Sq.Mtrs., situated at Industrial Estate, Peenya 2nd Stage, within the limits of Nallakadernahalli Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk and bounded on:

East by : 1st 'A' Main Road,
West by : Shed No.C-28,
North by : Service Road,
South by : Shed No.C-22.

Sd/- **S.F. GOUTAM CHAND**
Advocate
GOUTAM ASSOCIATES
No.60, 2nd Floor, Kanakapura Road,
Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560 004.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

M SELVARAJ (67yrs), Retired Senior Engineer - Printing, The Hindu, Maraimalai Nagar passed away on 03-04-2024. Address: Plot No: 7, Door No: 44, Renuka Illam, Hindu Colony, First Main Road, Ullagaram, Chennai-600091. Contact : 98414 22209.

Central Coalfields Limited
A Miniratna Company
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. **www.coalindia.in/** respective Subsidiary Company (CCL, **www.centralcoalfields.in**), CIL e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement Portal **https://eprocure.gov.in** in addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **https://gem.gov.in**"

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE XIV ADDL CITY CIVIL JUDGE (CCH 28) AT BANGALORE
ORIGINAL SUIT NO. 4618/2022 H.g. 18/05/204

BETWEEN :
ICICI Bank Ltd.
A body corporate, incorporated and registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 and licensed as a Bank under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 having Registered Office at : "Landmark", Race Course Circle, Vadodara- 390 007. and having its Regional office at ICICI Bank Ltd., No.4/10, 1st Floor, Mythree Tower, Bommanahalli, Hosur Road, Bangalore- 560 068, and represented by its POA Holder and Manager Mr. Rohith Ali M, S/o Ishrath Ali M. Age : 24 years. Age: 42 Years. ...PLAINTIFF
AND :
Mr. SUNIL PRASAD
....DEFENDANT

Summons to the defendant by way of paper publication

To,
Defendant :
Mr. SUNIL PRASAD,
Aged about 35 years,
Son of Ramaswamy Prasad,
Residing at. No. 22/23, K. Narayanpura Road,
Chodappa Layout,
Thanisandra, Near Garden City Super Market,
Bangalore- 560 077.

Whereas the Plaintiff above named has filed a suit under Order VII Rule 1 and 2 of the Civil Procedure Code for Recovery **Rs. 18,07,519/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Seven Thousand Five Hundred and Nineteen Only)** together with interest at the rate **18% p.a.** from date of due to till the date if realization.

You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court (CCH 28), in person or by a pleader on the **28/05/2024** at **11:00 am** to show cause against the suit, and failing wherein the suit will be heard and determined as exparte.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this **27th day of March, 2024.**

By the order of court
Asst. Registrar,
City Civil Court,
Bangalore

Advocates for Plaintiff
S.M ANEES AHAMED,
B.M. KHUSALAPPA
Advocate,
No.4 (10/2), West Park Road,
Kumara Park East,
Bangalore- 560 001

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BANGALORE (CCH- 53)
ORIGINAL SUIT NO. 5418 OF 2022
Hg. 29/05/2024

BETWEEN :
ICICI Bank Ltd,
A body corporate incorporated and registered under the Indian Companies Act, 1956 and licensed As a Bank under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 having Registered Office at : "Landmark", Race Course Circle, Vadodara - 390007. And having its Regional office at ICICI Bank Ltd., No. 4/10, 1st Floor, Mythree Tower, Bommanahalli, Hosur Road, Bangalore - 560 068, And represented by its POA holder and Manager Mr. Rohith Ali M, S/o Ishrath Ali M Age : 24 years.
...PLAINTIFF
AND:
Mr. VENKATESH B.S,
Summons to the defendants by way of paper publication

Defendants
Mr. VENKATESH B.S,
Aged about 25 years,
Son of Shankar B.G,
Residing at. No. 255, 6th Main, 2nd Stage,
Kumaraswamy Layout,
Near Dominos Pizza,
Bangalore- 560 078.
...DEFENDANTS

Whereas the Plaintiff above named has filed a suit under Order VII Rule 1 of the Civil Procedure Code for recovery of **Rs.2,94,440/- (Rupees Two Lakh Ninety Four Thousand Four Hundred And Forty Only)**as on together with interest at the rate 18% p.a. from date of due to till the date of realization. You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court, in person or by a pleader on **29/05/2024** at **11:00 am** to show cause against the suit, and failing wherein the suit will be heard and determined ex-parte.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 27th day of March, 2024

By the order of court
Asst. Registrar,
City Civil Court,
Bengaluru

Advocates for Plaintiff
S.M. ANEES AHAMED
B.M. KUSHALAPPA
Advocates,
No. 4(10/2), West Park Road,
Kumara Park East,
Bangalore- 560001

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, AZHAR Vahab A resident of Jaya Vihar, IV th Cross, Kirloskar Layout, Sidedahalli, Bengaluru–73 have changed my son's Name from Muhammed Zayan A S to Zayan Easa Muhammed A S vide Affidavit dated 28–03–2024.

I, MARIA Sravanthi Kumar, W/o Sunil Kumar, R/o G-007 A Block, VBC Oracle Ridge, Beretena Agrahara, Hosur Road, Bengaluru-560100 have changed my name to Lakshmisetty Mariasravanthi vide affidavit dt: 27.03.2024 sworn before Notary H.Sridhar Rao, B'lore.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE LII ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL & SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-53)
O.S No. 6146/2023

BETWEEN :
M/s ICICI Bank Limited, having its registered office at : Landmark, Race-Course Circle, Vadodara-390 007, and branch office at : 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanahalli, Hosur Main Road, Bengaluru-560 068 through its authorised representative
Mr. Harish E. ...Plaintiff
AND :
Mr. Clayton Newcastle
...Defendant

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION UNDER ORDER V RULE 20 OF CPC

Defendant:
Mr. Clayton Newcastle
Son of Donald Newcastle
Aged about 44 years, R/at 19, S1, Venkatadri Apartment, 3rd Main, MM Layout, KB Sandra, Bangalore North, RT Nagar, Bangalore-560 032.
PAN No. BDHPN4022N
Ph: 9535918903/7899301621
Email ID: Claytonanthonyvs@gmail.com

Whereas the plaintiff above named has instituted the above suit for recovery of money for sum of **Rs. 5,70,925.85/-** along with interest at the rate of 24% P.A. against you, and you are summoned to appear before the **LII Addl. City Civil & Sessions Judge at Bengaluru (C.C.H-53),** in person or by a pleader, on the day of H-**30/05/2024** at **11:00 A.M** to answer the claim, failing to which the suit would be disposed of Ex-Parte.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this the **27th day of March, 2024 at Bangalore.**

By Order of The Court
Assistant Registrar
Hon'ble City Civil Court Bengaluru

Advocate for Plaintiff
B.S. Jeevan Kumar
Vidhii Partners,
Advocates,
No. 701, Queens Corner 'A' 3, Queens Road,
Bengaluru-01.

M BG-BGE

Fiscal battle

Kerala's suit raises questions on States' right to borrow, Centre's power to limit

The Supreme Court of India order referring a suit filed by Kerala, challenging the Centre's decisions curtailing its borrowings, to a Constitution Bench is a welcome development. The Court declined to grant an interim order to restore the position prior to the imposition of borrowing limits by the Centre, but the referral will give a larger Bench an opportunity to examine the extent to which the Union government may regulate a State's borrowings. The litigation is much more than a tussle over the Centre's charge of fiscal mismanagement against the Left Front regime in the State. The Court has recognised that it is also a constitutional question on Centre-State relations: an apparent conflict between efforts to maintain the country's fiscal health on the one hand and moves that undermine the fiscal space of States on the other. At the heart of this dispute is Article 293, which confers executive power on the States to borrow money within limits prescribed by the State legislature. It also allows the Union to extend loans and guarantees to the States, and requires the Centre to give its consent and impose conditions for States to raise further loans while earlier ones are outstanding. Kerala contends that the Article does not confer on the Centre any power to regulate all State loans and that it can impose conditions only on borrowings from the Centre.

Kerala also challenges the Union's decision to include borrowings by State-owned enterprises and the liabilities on its public account under its 'Net Borrowing Ceiling' (quantified as 3% of its projected Gross State Domestic Product for 2023-24, or ₹32,442 crore). A 2018 amendment to the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act capped the 'general government debt', or the sum total of the debts of the Central and State governments, at 60% of the GDP. The Union government argues that public finance being a national issue, it wanted to prevent the use of off-budget borrowings to bypass the borrowing ceiling. It also claims that unlimited borrowing by State governments will have the spillover effect of raising the cost of borrowing and crowding out private sector borrowers. The issue comes at a time when the current formula for distribution of revenue is seen as one that penalises States that perform better on social indicators. It is no surprise that Kerala, a topper in social advancement, faces this crisis. In an era in which a major revenue source for the States has been subsumed by a system in which they share the proceeds of a common Goods and Services Tax with the Centre, fiscal space has become precious. It is now up to the highest court to determine how strict the Centre should be on borrowing limits and giving consent to hold States to their fiscal obligations without violating federal norms.

Dangerous game

Commercial interest should not be allowed to override public health, safety

In February this year, the Supreme Court of India issued a contempt notice against Patanjali Ayurved for publishing misleading advertisements that were in direct violation of the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 and its Rules despite the company's assurance to the Court in November last year that it would not do so. On Tuesday, the apex court turned up the heat by threatening Patanjali's co-founder Baba Ramdev with perjury proceedings in addition to contempt. The two-member Bench again came down heavily on the government, this time for turning a blind eye when the company was promoting its products as a panacea during the COVID-19 pandemic, in blatant violation of the Act. While the Court has asked the government to file an affidavit to dispel the impression that it was complicit, the fact is that the government did almost nothing to inform the people that Coronil was not a "cure" for COVID-19 – as claimed by the company in June 2020 – but only a "supporting measure in COVID-19". In February 2021, the presence of Harsh Vardhan, then Union Health Minister, along with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, at a press conference organised by Patanjali to promote Coronil, made the company's claims sound very credible.

Emboldened by the absence of penal action by the courts or the government for the false claim that Coronil could cure COVID-19, the company went on an advertisement spree in 2022 claiming that its products could cure many non-communicable diseases and conditions. The advertisements also denigrated and derided evidence-based medicine (allopathy). On November 21, 2023 the Court warned the company not to advertise permanent cures and threatened to impose a penalty of ₹1 crore on every product for which such claims were made. But, in absolute defiance, the company held a press conference the next day to defend its products. In December last year and January 2024, cocking a snook at the Court, the company again issued newspaper advertisements, compelling the Court to issue a contempt notice in February. It is highly unlikely that the company could have continued to act this way in the absence of at least tacit support from the government at the Centre and in Uttarakhand, where the company is based. Independent of the Court, the absence of any restraining order by the government to stop the company from freely advertising highly misleading claims only strengthens the suspicion. In matters related to health and medicine, the government playing favouritism can be extremely dangerous and harmful. Allowing commercial interests to override public health and safety can be perilous.

Turning the spotlight on the urban poor

Indranil De

is Professor, Institute of Rural Management Anand

The India Employment Report (IER) 2024 by the Institute for Human Development and International Labour Organization poses questions on the trickle-down effect of benefits to the working class in the backdrop of a 5.4% average real economic growth, from 2015-16 to 2022-23. It also shows a divergent trend between rural and urban areas in terms of employment and income. It demonstrates a relatively higher unemployment rate in urban areas, at 4.8% in 2000 over the 1.5% in rural areas. However, average monthly earnings are higher by 76% for self-employed, 44% for regular employed and 22% for casual labour in urban areas in 2022. The coexistence of higher unemployment and wages requires further investigation to understand its implications for the urban poor. This article looks at the dynamics of employment and wages in pockets of deep urban poverty, such as slums, and juxtaposes these with the findings of the IER 2024.

The higher income in urban areas and a better life have prompted rural-urban migration in the past. As in the IER 2024, although overall migration has increased, the migration of males has declined by 1.2% during 2000-08, and further marginally in 2021. This implies that migration for economic mobility is losing its sheen. Rural poor households migrate to slums instead of formal settlements. Hence, an analysis of income and employment trends of slum dwellers would reveal the prospects of economic mobility and decent work for the poor in urban India.

Findings of survey in Kolkata

This writer and a team conducted a survey in 37 slums across different parts of Kolkata in 2012. These slums were again surveyed in 2022-23. However, we could track only 29 slums as the other slums had either been redeveloped or evicted. We surveyed 513 slum households in 2012 and 396 in 2021-22. To get the overall trends from 2012, we collected data on income and employment in slums in 2019, the pre-COVID-19 year, to avoid the COVID-19-affected years of 2019-22, for comparison.

The major occupations in slums in Kolkata have remained the same over the decade, with a fourth of the working population taking on unskilled labour. It is the most stable and significant occupation in slums. The IER 2024 also finds that a fourth of workers in India were engaged in unskilled work during this period. Other major occupations in slums were skilled or semi-skilled labour work, and people as employees in private organisations, and owning petty businesses or small shops. Unlike unskilled labour, the share of employment in skilled and semi-skilled labour was reduced by 6%, and in private organisations by 3% between 2012-19.

> An analysis of income and employment trends of slum dwellers points to the prospects of economic mobility and decent work for the poor in urban India

On the other hand, employment has increased by 9% in petty businesses or small shops. Surprisingly, the share of other self-employed has also declined by 3%. Among occupations that were less popular earlier but which gained momentum in the last 10 years are truck driving and cleaning, by 5%, and construction and related work, by 4%. The people employed in construction and related-work were minuscule in 2012.

Income trends

The average monthly income in 2012 was around ₹4,900. It decreased by 5% at constant prices (2012) in 2019. Income was the highest for government employees in the slums in both periods. However, at constant prices in 2012, their monthly income decreased by 5% in 2019. On the other hand, the monthly income of domestic servants and unskilled workers has remained the lowest. The highest decline in real income is observed for construction and related work (51%), followed by petty business or small shop (32%) and government service (32%) in 2019 as compared to 2012.

The decline in income and the rise in engagement with petty business or small shops and construction or related work indicates a need for gainful employment options. Medium to large shop owners have also lost real income by 26%. The popularity of labour work can be explained by the rise in the real income of unskilled labour by 33%. Income of skilled or semi-skilled labour increased by 12% but a lesser proportion are employed in 2019 compared to 2012. It implies the reduction of the availability of skilled or semi-skilled labour work.

The IER 2024 illustrates similar trends of changes in employment and wages. The share of self-employed (including business) has increased from 38.7% to 41.3% for males and from 34.5% to 44.8% for females in urban areas between 2000-19. However, real monthly wages (at 2012 prices) declined for self-employed from ₹7,017 to ₹6,843 and for regular workers from ₹12,100 to ₹11,155 but increased for casual workers (including labour) from ₹3,701 to ₹4,364 between 2012-19. This implies that the economic transition observed by the IER 2024 is a reflection of the transformation happening in urban slums.

Interestingly, the fall in slum income of the highest income earners, government servants, is accompanied by a doubling of the real income of the lowest income earners, domestic servants. This implies that there was a general downfall in income, along with a reduction in the differences in income from 2012-19. Other statistical measures also show a fall in inequality in slums.

The gender composition within different occupation categories in Kolkata shows that overall, the percentage of women in the workforce has declined by 3% in 2021-22 compared to 2012. However, the IER 2024 shows a 1.6% increase in women's workforce participation during 2012 and 2022. This may be due to an increase in female workforce participation in non-slum areas rather than in slum areas.

Rise in casual work

A comparison of the IER 2024 and our survey data shows that the rise of casual work, especially labour work, has happened due to increasing wages. However, casual work offers a sub-standard work condition without any social security. On the contrary, self-employment such as businesses, is rising but without a commensurate rise in income. It projects a groundswell of low-earning petty businesspeople in slums. Slum women could not march with the overall rising trends of female workforce participation in urban areas. With the reduction of inequality, income also fell leading the urban poor to deeper poverty. Hence, the higher income in urban areas compared to rural India does not delineate the urban poor's economic mobility and quality of work. Hence, more public support is required in urban areas for access to cheap food and gainful employment. It also explains the declining male migration during 2000-08. As the Gross Value Added in agriculture, forestry and fishing grew at the slowest rate (3.03%) compared to other sectors during 2000-19, along with a negative employment growth (1.05%), focusing more on rural non-farm would be imperative.

The views expressed are personal

Systems science for a better future

Arun Maira

is the author of 'Shaping the Future: A Guide for Systems Leaders'

The Pew Research Center surveyed the citizens of many countries in 2023 to gauge how many prefer authoritarian rulers to multi-party democracy. The numbers choosing dictators will dismay democrats. In the Global South: India (85%), Indonesia (77%), South Africa (66%) and Brazil (57%). In the West: the United Kingdom (37%) and the United States (32%), which are significant numbers too. China and Russia were not surveyed.

Citizens of democratic countries have lost trust in their governments' economic policies. Average incomes may be rising but the very rich are becoming much richer, faster. Large corporations and financial institutions are compelling governments to set the rules of the game in their favour by reducing taxes for them, emasculating labour institutions, and exploiting the natural environment for their profit.

Moreover, the growth of the global economy and human population has brought humanity to the brink. Scientists predict that the overuse of fossil energy for fuelling modern consumptive lifestyles will make life on earth impossible beyond this century. Water, fundamental for life, is also running out. India is among the most water stressed large countries in the world.

India has 17.5% of the world's population living on only 2.4% of the world's land. In 2014, India ranked 155 out of 178 countries in the global Environment Performance Index, meanwhile, in 2022, India slipped to the very bottom – 180 out of 180. India, also the world's most populous country, has an additional problem, *viz.* to increase the incomes of its citizens faster. While economists chase GDP targets, inequality is increasing and we are spoiling the earth which supports the economy and sustains our lives.

The science of systems

Keeping the forest in sight, do not get lost in the trees, is good advice. Many things must be known, and their interconnections mapped, to understand how the world works. All sciences – social, medical, and natural – are fragmented into narrow silos. Locked within their echo-chambers, scientists in different disciplines do not learn from each other. As the sciences advance, experts know more but about less. No one sees the whole. Politics and economics are integral parts of complex social systems. It is moot whether the weakening of democratic institutions empowers large capitalist institutions or whether capitalist institutions corrode democracy. What has broken down is the comprehension of complex systems with diverse forces, and human egos, within them.

> Rather than specialised sciences focused on parts, a higher-level science is required — one of holistic, self-adaptive systems

Economics emerged as a distinct science out of philosophy and the humanities in the early 20th century. Modern economists do not understand how societies function. By the century's end, free market fundamentalism had become an ideology. Leave it to the "invisible hand" of the market because it knows best, these economists say. Behind the invisible hand is the power of capital. The rights of capital, and its freedom to roam the world across national boundaries and make more profits, trump the rights of human beings moving across borders searching for safer lives.

Systems' knowledge has been devalued by specialisation. Heart specialists can keep the heart alive with amazing technologies. Brain specialists delve deeper into the biology of the brain. They lose sight of the whole human being. Climate scientists research how to remove carbon from the atmosphere, but the effects of their solutions on the livelihoods of citizens are not in their science's scope. High-tech solutions can improve parts of complex systems while reducing overall health and well-being.

Any intelligence within a system cannot comprehend the system that produced it. Modern science gave human beings hubris that they could conquer "unruly nature" as Francis Bacon declared at the emergence of the European Enlightenment. The arrogant scientific man thought he could change the system that had created him. His scientific fixes of the world, and scientific improvements of his own genes, are threatening humanity's existence.

In times of uncertainty, people yearn for certainty. They follow godmen, dictators, and wealthy technologists because these people claim to know the truth and have the power to apply it. When economists and scientists with their incomplete understanding of the world become the guides of leaders and steer social and economic policies, the losers are both common people and the natural environment that sustains everyone's lives. Recalling the idea of the ancient Greek poet Archilochus – "A fox knows many things, but a hedgehog knows one big thing" – philosopher Isaiah Berlin divided thinkers into "foxes" and "hedgehogs". Great writers, like Leo Tolstoy, who combined many perspectives in their histories were both hedgehogs and foxes, Berlin said. They understood the fundamental nature of existence and the limits of any rational scientific approach to it.

Rather than specialised sciences focused on parts, a higher-level science is required: a science of holistic, self-adaptive systems which include human egos in them. Complex self-adaptive systems have three components: systems being, systems thinking, and systems acting. Systems being requires humility. Systems thinking requires the mind of the "hedgehog-fox" to see patterns among the details.

Enterprises for cooperation

Systems acting to improve the world for everyone must be driven by organisations whose purpose is cooperation, not by organisations driven by competition. The purpose of business corporations and armies is to make more profit and gain more power, whereas the purpose of families is to improve the well-being of their members. Family members have natural differences in sex and generational abilities. Yet, they cooperate with each other for the well-being of all.

Women's contributions to the well-being of families and societies are under-valued in money terms and not counted in GDP. Economists say that few Indian women are in the labour force, whereas, for centuries, women have been working harder than men, producing social and economic value for their families and communities.

The world needs more caring, less competition. Women are natural family builders and systems facilitators whereas men are brought up to compete. Rather than men teaching women to think like men and compete with them in hierarchies of the formal labour force, men must learn the caring ways of women to make the world better for everyone.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An old issue

The Bharatiya Janata Party is trying hard to milk the Katchatheevu issue for all it is worth. Was the Prime Minister putting the 'party first' or the 'nation first'? Instead of raking up what happened in a bygone era in the run-up to the general election, the top leader ought to have raised the issue of the retrieval of the islet with the Sri Lankan government during his rule. He manifestly failed to dissuade the Sri Lankan government from arresting Indian fishermen. Jingoism, sabre-rattling and bellicosity are only for domestic consumption.

G. David Milton,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

The Katchatheevu issue has been well explained in all the relevant forums and history books.
Compared to the area of the islet of Katchatheevu, China is said to have usurped thousands of square kilometres of land from India. Why are there weak statements on this?

Tharcius S. Fernando,
Chennai

It is but natural for the Sri Lankan media to be peeved about an issue that was considered long settled. Just like the *Sengol*, that many had neither heard of or even forgotten, and which was needlessly refurbished at the time of commissioning the new Parliament building, Katchatheevu too will find no traction among the citizens of Tamil Nadu. Even if our leaders were 'wrong' as far as the Katchatheevu issue, there is very little that can be done about it now. In the larger interests of good neighbourly diplomacy, it is best we avoid such delicate topics as part of election rhetoric.

H.N. Ramakrishna,
Bengaluru

A 'cure' and the court

It was amusing to come across the phrase, "self-styled yoga guru", in the report, "Why did Centre turn a blind eye to Patanjali's 'COVID cure' claim, asks SC", April 3). Are not all the umpteen number of "gurus" mushrooming across India self-styled? As long as you know the art of fooling the masses and earning followers, you can be a "leader" in politics or "religion" in the present context in India.

C.K. Prem Kumar,
Palakkad, Kerala

This is not the first time that Patanjali has found itself in the middle of a row. It is well known that the 'guru' is a staunch supporter of a well-known national party. That the Court has used strong language in the case underscores the seriousness of the issue in health care.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Living wills implementation lags in India

Nihal Sahu

is a lawyer, writer, and Research Fellow at the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, New Delhi

In early March this year, 30 people in Thrissur in Kerala executed living wills. Living wills have been legal since 2018, when the Supreme Court of India created a process to allow terminally-ill patients, with no hope of a cure, to withhold or withdraw treatment and die with dignity. Since patients may not be able to communicate their wishes for a variety of reasons, including being unconscious or suffering from dementia, living wills allow them to make choices about future medical care. Six years after the judgment, however, the Court's process is unavailable in most of India. Officials remain unlikely to implement the procedure without direct orders and guidance from State governments.

When the Court created the process, it was unworkably complex. As the Court worried that "unscrupulous persons who wish to inherit or otherwise grab the property of the patient" might abuse the process, it created elaborate bureaucratic procedures as safeguards. One particular requirement – that living wills must be countersigned by a judicial magistrate – was too much of a burden. Predictably, few living wills were executed in the first five years after the judgment. In January 2023, the Court recognised that requiring a judge to countersign each living will 'impaired, if not completely defeat' the objective of its judgment, and streamlined the procedure.

Under the streamlined procedure, living wills have to be signed in the presence of two witnesses, attested before a notary or a gazetted officer, and handed over to a "competent officer" in the local government who will act as a custodian. If the patient becomes terminally ill and does not have decision-making capacity, the treating doctor is to authenticate the living will against the copy held with the custodian or against digital health records, if any. However, local governments have not generally designated custodians for living wills, nor are they likely to. In Maharashtra, a public interest litigation had to be filed in the High Court of Bombay, with the result that Maharashtra appointed 417 custodians across the State recently. As for digital health records, the National Health Authority is yet to produce a protocol that will allow living wills to be authenticated through digital health records.

Making a living will does not automatically imply that it will be given effect. The guidelines require that the decisions on withholding or withdrawing treatment are certified first by a primary medical board and then confirmed by a secondary medical board. The secondary board must have a doctor nominated by the chief medical officer. Practically, this means that hospitals cannot have secondary medical boards unless the chief medical officer has nominated a doctor in the hospital where you are a patient. As a consequence, terminally-ill patients – even those who have made living wills – may not be able to make critical decisions about medical care.

It is not difficult to imagine why this happened. Officials are discomfited, like many of us, by the subjects of death, mortality, and end-of-life care. The whole subject is strange and unfamiliar, the guidelines are sometimes ambiguous, and the stakes are high. For example, the Supreme Court requires the primary medical board, if the patient does not have a living will, to obtain the written consent of the 'next of kin' for withdrawing/withholding treatment.

But Indian law does not have a clear definition for 'next of kin'. When family members disagree about the best course of action, the law does not provide a clear answer about whose decision finally governs. They are bound to argue in the absence of a clear legal commandment. Officials will not be eager to issue orders, at their own risk, for the implementation of a Supreme Court judgment on such a sensitive subject. They will want a direct order from their superiors and a detailed process created by the State government before proceeding. They do not seek discretion. They want to anchor the polity to a rock.

And, similarly, State governments are reluctant to wade in; the area is complex and requires attention from medical and legal experts. Last year, Haryana issued directions to civil surgeons across the State to follow the judgment but did not offer essential guidance or protocols on how to implement it. A more thorough approach is being followed in Odisha, where the State government has formed a committee of experts to consider detailed draft orders for implementing the judgment. More States, hopefully, will follow suit. The Central government can bridge the gap in expertise by developing and publishing model orders and protocols which can provide State governments the confidence and the guidance to effectively implement the judgment.

Six years after the Supreme Court declared that Indians have the right to die with dignity, our governments have failed to take basic steps to implement it. Until they implement the judgment, doctors will remain worried about the consequences of giving effect to their patients' express wishes. To quote a survey in 2023 of intensive care doctors, "[t]here is a general belief that [end-of-life] decisions are fraught with legal implications, and this becomes a major barrier to taking these decisions in the ICU." Only effective guidance and persistent action at every level of government will give doctors the confidence they need to act in the patient's best interests.

State governments are reluctant to wade in; the area is complex and requires attention from medical and legal experts

Legal battles and political tensions

A.P. CM's proposal to shift the capital from Amaravati has sparked controversy

STATE OF PLAY

V. Raghavendra
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Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's proposal to shift the capital from Amaravati to Visakhapatnam in the name of decentralisation had come as a bolt from the blue for the thousands of farmers who visualised a global city taking shape on the multi-cropped lands given by them under the much hyped Land Pooling Scheme.

They were, for obvious reasons, gushing with exuberance over N. Chandrababu Naidu's 'dream project' of a greenfield 'people's capital' modeled on the lines of some of the world's great cities like Singapore.

Ironically, the Singapore government played a significant role in designing the capital of Andhra Pradesh, as did the renowned London-based Foster + Partners on being solicited by Mr. Naidu.

The mega Amaravati project started with such a bang in 2014 when the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) came to power but five years down the lane, it ended with a whimper as Mr. Reddy had a different plan of 'three capitals', which he pursued all these years. That the construction of the capital city needed at least 30,000 acres was the initial stand taken by him when he was the leader of the Opposition.

But then for the sake of political expediency or perhaps a more justifiable reason, he changed tack, thereby pushing Amaravati into oblivion but with a promise to develop it as the 'Legislative Capital'

comprising the Legislative Council and Assembly, while shifting the CMO, the Secretariat and offices of Heads of Departments to Visakhapatnam (executive capital) and the High Court to Kurnool (judicial capital).

The land-givers challenged the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020 in the courts and a protracted legal battle waged by them since then ended on a positive note with the Andhra Pradesh High Court ruling on March 3, 2022 that the State government lacked the legislative competence to shift or even split the capital and that Amaravati should be developed as the single capital city. But their happiness was short-lived as the State challenged the High Court judgment by filing a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court. There are also a slew of contempt petitions to be decided by the Court.

Meanwhile, the debate is still raging outside the legal realm as the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) is bent on giving the three capitals a tangible shape if it retains power subject, of course, to the outcome of the cases being looked into by the Supreme Court.

The TDP took it as a prestige issue having promised to build a world class capital city but the situation became topsy-turvy after Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy took the reins. The issue had already infused a lot of bad blood between the YSRCP and the TDP while the BJP had been saying that the capital should not be shifted to Visakhapatnam but the High Court could be moved to Kurnool. This is seen as a duplicitous stand taken by the BJP, which has said that the Centre 'notified' Amaravati as the capital, and remained non-committal beyond that position.

The TDP has argued that Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy's idea of decentralisation is driven by his political objectives and vowed to start rebuilding Amaravati if people vote for it this time around.

'Failed experiment'

On his part, Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy kept the issue alive, rather, he ensured that the embers continued to burn. It is pertinent to mention that the TDP and the Jana Sena Party (JSP) have been saying that the 'three capitals' was a 'failed experiment' copied from South Africa which tried Pretoria, Cape Town and Bloemfontein as the executive, legislative and judicial capitals. Mr. Naidu and some of the Ministers in his Cabinet faced serious allegations of 'insider trading' of land in Amaravati. Eventually, criminal cases were booked against them which, Mr. Naidu and others argued, was nothing but a part of the YSRCP's game of political vendetta.

On the flip side, whether it will yield electoral dividends for the YSRCP or the TDP-BJP-JSP combine and the turn it is likely to take after the elections are for anyone to hazard a guess.

How firms without profits donated through bonds

An analysis reveals that at least 45 companies that donated electoral bonds to the ruling BJP have suspect funding sources

DATA POINT

Prasenjit Bose
The Hindu Data Team

The sources of funds of at least 45 companies that donated electoral bonds to various political parties (and whose financials could be matched with data from the CMIE Prowess IQ Database) are found to be suspect based on a joint analysis by *The Hindu* and an independent research team. These 45 companies are subdivided into four categories (A, B, C & D). 33 companies donated an aggregate sum of ₹576.2 crore in EBs, out of which ₹434.2 crore (nearly 75%) was encashed by the BJP. These companies had negative or near zero profit after tax in aggregate over seven years, from 2016-17 to 2022-23. The aggregate net losses of these 33 companies were over ₹1 lakh crore. 16 out of these 33 companies (category A) paid zero or negative direct taxes in aggregate. That these loss-making companies made such substantial donations indicates they could be acting as fronts for other firms or have misreported their profits and losses – raising the possibility of money laundering.

Six companies donated a total of ₹646 crore, out of which ₹601 crore (93%) was encashed by the BJP. They had positive net profits in aggregate from 2016-17 to 2022-23, but the amounts donated through EBs exceeded their aggregate net profit significantly. These companies (category B) could also have acted as fronts for other companies or have misreported their profits and losses.

Three companies donated an aggregate sum of ₹193.8 crore, out of which ₹28.3 crore (around 15%) was encashed by the BJP. Of the rest, the Congress received ₹91.6 crore (47%), the Trinamool - ₹45.9 crore & 24%, BRS and BJD - ₹10 crore, close to 5% each, and the AAP - ₹7 crore & 3.6%. These three companies had positive net profits but reported negative direct taxes in aggregate from 2016-17 to 2022-23. Such companies (category C) could have engaged in tax evasion.

Three companies (category D) donated a total of ₹16.4 crore in EBs, out of which ₹4.9 crore (around 30%) was encashed by the BJP and the rest by the Congress (58%), Akali Dal and JD(U), 6.1% each. These three companies had no reported data on net profits or direct taxes paid for the entire seven-year period which raises the question of whether the donors were shell companies that were involved in money laundering.

Internal communications between the RBI and the Finance Ministry brought to light the central bank's doubts regarding the EB scheme since its inception. In a letter to a Finance Ministry official dated January 30, 2017, the Chief General Manager of the RBI wrote: "Even the intended purpose of transparency may not be achievable, as the original buyer... need not be the actual contributor to a political party. The bonds are bearer bonds and are transferable by delivery. Hence, who finally... contributes the bond to the political party will not be known. While the person/entity buying the bearer bond will be as per [KYC] parameters, the identities of the intervening persons/entities will not be known. Thus... the spirit of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) 2002 [is] affected." The then revenue secretary Hasmukh Adhia, wrote in response: "[The] RBI has not understood the proposed mechanism of having pre-paid instruments to keep the identity of the donor secret while ensuring that donation is made only out of fully tax paid money of a person." The Finance Ministry went ahead with the introduction of the electoral bonds scheme in January 2018, authorising the SBI to issue and encash the bearer bonds. The scheme continued till January 2024 before the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional. Data from these 45 EB donor companies seem to vindicate RBI's concerns about money laundering and tax evasion.

Losses no bar

Electoral bond donations by firms, their net profits, direct taxes and share of bonds donated to the ruling party

Rank	Company name	Total amount of electoral bonds purchased ₹ cr	Share of electoral bonds donated to BJP	Sum of net profits, FY17 to FY23	Sum of direct taxes paid, FY17 to FY23
		₹ crore	(%)	₹ crore	₹ crore
CATEGORY A: SUM OF NET PROFITS, 2016-2017 TO 2022-2023 <= 0 (POSITIVE DONATION WITH ZERO PROFIT/NET LOSS)					
1	Bharti Airtel Ltd.	198	99.7	-76954.7	-8250
2	Dhariwal Infrastructure Ltd.	115	21.7	-299	0
3	S E P C Power Pvt. Ltd.	40	12.5	-147.9	0.8
4	D L F Luxury Homes Ltd.	25	100	-128.2	-19.3
5	P R L Developers Pvt. Ltd.	20	50	-1550.5	-4.7
6	S D Corporation Pvt. Ltd.	17	100	-10.4	26.4
7	Eugia Pharma Specialities Ltd.	15	100	-28.9	-7.2
8	Mytrah Energy (India) Pvt. Ltd.	19	52.6	-86.8	-126.3
9	Satec Envir Engg. (India) Pvt. Ltd.	12	100	-146.4	-1.6
10	Athena Infrastructure Ltd.	10	100	-198.6	70
11	Bright Star Invsts. Pvt. Ltd.	10	100	-492.5	110.5
12	Chandrajyoti Estate Developers Pvt. Ltd.	10	100	-22.3	1.1
13	Pegasus Properties Pvt. Ltd.	10	100	-91.3	17.1
14	Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd.	10	100	-16376.6	-5178.5
15	Selene Constructions Ltd.	10	100	-52.4	15.3
16	Sylvanus Properties Ltd.	10.5	100	-278.6	80.3
17	Greenko Energy Projects Pvt. Ltd.	8	100	-120.3	12.7
18	Warora-Chandrapur-Ballarpur Tollroad Ltd.	7	100	-4.6	4.9
19	Oriental South Delhi Hotels Pvt. Ltd.	5	100	-49.1	0
20	Village De Nandi Pvt. Ltd.	5	100	-48	0
21	U M Cables Ltd.	4.5	88.9	-19.4	8.3
22	Omkar Realtors & Developers Pvt. Ltd.	4.5	66.7	-1560	9.3
23	Taquito Lease Operators Pvt. Ltd.	4	100	-167.4	-0.2
24	Arvind Beauty Brands Retail Pvt. Ltd.	3	100	-111.7	-13.2
25	S N S Clothing Pvt. Ltd.	2	100	-0.7	0.1
26	Chowgule & Co. Pvt. Ltd.	2	85	-413.9	128.5
27	Gannon Dunkerley & Co. Ltd.	1.5	100	-121.9	-42.1
28	Inox Leisure Ltd.	1	100	-283.5	-17.1
29	J N S Instruments Ltd.	1	100	-35	0
30	Panacea Biotec Ltd.	1	100	-466.6	53.3
31	Arihant Enterprises Ltd.	0.4	100	-0.3	0
32	Dempo Industries Pvt. Ltd.	0.2	75	-1.9	6.7
33	Geojit Investment Services Ltd.	0.1	25	-3.48	0.64
	TOTAL	**581.7**	**74.7**		
CATEGORY B: DONATION AMOUNT HIGHER THAN SUM OF NET PROFITS, 2016-2017 TO 2022-2023					
1	Qwik Supply Chain Pvt. Ltd.	410	91.5	144.1	62.45
2	Madanlal Ltd.	185.5	94.6	2.07	-3.11
3	Nexg Devices Pvt. Ltd.	35	100	28.85	14.99
4	A B N L Investment Ltd.	10	100	8.97	4.69
5	Pragati Enterprises Ltd.	3.5	100	0.02	0
6	Shree Krishna Infrastructure Ltd.	2	100	0.16	0.04
	TOTAL	**646**	**93**		
CATEGORY C: DONATION AMOUNT POSITIVE BUT SUM OF DIRECT TAXES, 2016-17 TO 2022-23 <= 0 (ZERO OR NEGATIVE DIRECT TAXES)					
1	M K J Enterprises Ltd.	192.4	14	60.33	-10.62
2	Patel Highway Mgmt. Pvt. Ltd.	1	100	24.86	-1.53
3	A B C India Ltd.	0.4	100	11.85	-2.24
	TOTAL	**193.8**	**14.6**		
CATEGORY D: NO DATA ON PROFITS OR TAXES AVAILABLE					
1	Bharti Infratel Services Ltd.	12	16.7	NA	NA
2	Kamal Trading Co. Ltd.	3.5	57.1	NA	NA
3	Jai Suspension Systems Ltd.	0.9	100	NA	NA
	TOTAL	**16.4**	**29.9**		
	Grand total (45 companies)	1437.9	74.3		

NA: No information available

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 4, 1974

'River awards outside Supreme Court purview'

New Delhi, April 3: A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court has permitted the State of Karnataka (petitioner) to withdraw its special leave petition filed in the court against the award of the Krishna Waters Tribunal.

The Tribunal had, in its awards, directed that the distribution of the waters of the Krishna and its tributaries, among Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh was limited to 75 per cent of the "dependable flows" and had determined 2, 060 tmc feet. during a water year on the basis of the agreement of the parties. Of this total availability, the Tribunal had allocated 800 tmc feet. to Andhra Pradesh, 695 tmc feet. to Karnataka and 565 tmc feet. to Maharashtra.

According to the petitioner, the Tribunal had allocated water to Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh keeping intact the existing utilisations without recording a finding whether the interests of Karnataka were or were likely to be affected prejudicially as required by the Inter-State Water Disputes Act and without further finding as to the optimum use to which the water might be out.

Mr. C. K. Daphtary, former Attorney-General, who argued for the petitioner State, contended that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to entertain an appeal under Article 136 of the Constitution (special leave jurisdiction) against a decision of an Inter-State Water Tribunal was barred only in respect of a "water dispute" within the meaning of Inter-State Water Disputes Act.

Counsel said the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under Article 136 was not ousted because of Article 262 (adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers or river valleys, etc.)

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 4, 1924

Trichy-Villupuram line.

Trichinopoly, April 3: In the final list of railway stations sanctioned for the Trichy-Villupuram line, two more new stations have been added. At the 51st mile between Pennadam and Sendurai, a flag station will be opened at Mattur and at mile 62 between Sendurai and Ariyalur, there will be a station at Kuttur. At mile 100.5 the proposed station will be named Bikshandarkoil instead of Kuthur between Srirangam and Salgudi.

From Page One

SC to list pleas to verify count in all EVMs

The court had held that a "paper trail" was an "indispensable requirement of free and fair elections", and directed the EC to introduce VVPAT in EVMs. "It is the satisfaction and verification of the voter that is at the heart of electoral democracy and not just that of the EC, domain experts, political parties, or candidates," the petitioners argued.

One of the petitions filed by activist Arun Kumar Agrawal has challenged a guideline of the EC mandating sequential VVPAT verification, that is, one after the other, causing undue delay. The petition proposes simultaneous VVPAT verification by deploying more personnel for counting in each constituency.

It noted that while the government had spent about ₹5,000 crore to purchase nearly 24 lakh VVPATs, only slips from approximately 20,000 VVPATs could be verified.

The EC, in an affidavit in September 2023, had countered that "there is no fundamental right of the voter to verify through VVPATs that their votes were 'recorded as cast' and 'counted as recorded'".

In the affidavit spanning over 450 pages, the EC assured the Supreme Court that EVMs could neither be hacked nor tampered. They were "totally standalone machines having one-time programmable chips". The poll body also ruled out the need to "redesign" VVPATs.

"The existing VVPAT enables electors to check whether their votes have gone to the candidate of their choice... Further there is a provision for mandatory verification of printed VVPAT part slips of five randomly selected polling stations of each Assembly constituency/segment, which is the audit of the electronic vote before the results," the ECI said.

The EC said counting of 100% VVPAT slips would pose a "great difficulty".

In SC, T.N. accuses Centre of delaying funds

Mr. Stalin had complained about the lack of adequate flood relief from the Centre after Prime Minister Narendra Modi commented, ahead of the election, about the Congress "callously giving away" the strategic Katchatheevu island to Sri Lanka and Mr. Stalin's party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), doing "nothing" to safeguard Tamil Nadu's interests.

Tamil Nadu's suit follows that of recent ones by Kerala and Karnataka in the Supreme Court. Kerala has accused the Centre of arbitrarily interfering in its net borrowing limits, pushing the State to the brink of a financial emergency. Karnataka has moved the Supreme Court for the release of drought relief under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

The State, represented by senior advocates P. Wilson and advocate D. Kumanan, submitted it had sent a representation to the Union as early as on December 14 last year for ₹19,692.69 crore as financial aid to tide over the extensive damage caused by the cyclone. There has been no action forthcoming from the Centre despite a representation submitted by the State on December 14, 2023 through the Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) of the Union Home Ministry.

Again, both Mr. Stalin and the Chief Secretary had sent representations on December 19 last year and January 10, 2024 for release of ₹18,214.52 crore to aid in the restoration and rehabilitation of lives hit by the unprecedented floods in the southern districts in December 2023. The Centre has not taken a final decision on the assistance to the State from the NDRF even after a lapse of almost three months from the date of submission of memoranda.

Tamil Nadu urged the top court to put the Centre on the clock and release the disaster funds within a specific timeframe.

Cong. launches door-to-door drive with 'guarantee cards' for LS polls

Congress chief says the the Prime Minister had promised two crore jobs but those never reached people while his party had always worked for the people; Rahul says the party will work towards providing equal opportunities to the youth

Satvika Mahajan
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with Jairam Ramesh and party workers during the launch of Congress Guarantee Cards for the LS election, in North East Delhi on Wednesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Launching its *"Ghar Ghar* Guarantee" initiative in the national capital, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi talks about "*Modi Ki* Guarantee" but it is "unsuccessful" and does not reach people.

Under the "*Ghar Ghar* Guarantee" campaign, the Congress plans to reach out to eight crore households across the country with its promise of *Paanch Nyay Pachees* Guarantee [Five pillars of justice and 25 guarantees].

While Mr. Kharge distributed pamphlets in Usmanpur in the North East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency, senior leader Rahul Gandhi – who filed his nomination from Wayanad – posted a picture of him handing over the party's "guarantee card", on X, to a woman.

Mr. Gandhi said his party's "*Paanch Nyay* and 25 Guarantees" are a promise to provide every Indian with a better future, equal opportunities, and a fair share in India's growth.

General secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh said the "*Ghar Ghar* Guarantee" campaign is being launched from Usmanpur, the same place from where the Congress used the "hand" symbol for the first time in 1978 and now the campaign's tagline is also *Haath Badlega Halaat* [Hand will change the conditions].

The North East Delhi seat is one of the seven seats that the Congress will be contesting in alliance with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), with Congress contesting on three seats and the AAP on four.

"Our *Paanch* big guarantees are - *Pehli Naukri Pakki*: Every educated youth will have their first job guaranteed with ₹1 lakh salary; Mahalakshmi: One woman in every poor family will be given ₹1 lakh every year; *Sahi Daam* and *Karz Mukti*: Loan waiver and legal status to MSP, according to the Swaminathan Commission's formula; *Shram Ka Samman*: ₹400 per day, National Minimum Wage, including for MGNREGA; *Ginti Karo*: Every individual and every community to be counted through a nationwide census to ensure social and economic equity... We will ensure the benefits of the nation's progress are not cornered by a few, but rather reach every household," Mr. Gandhi said on X.

Guarantee card

Hitting out at Mr. Modi during the release of the "guarantee card" in the North East Delhi constituency, Mr. Kharge said the Prime Minister had promised two crore jobs but those never reached people; the party also didn't fulfil its promise of doubling farmers' income and providing a legal guarantee for MSP on crops.

He also recalled how Congress governments in the past gave guarantees and programmes like the MGNREGA rural job guarantee scheme, Right to Information, Right to Food, and Right to Education.

The Opposition party will release its Lok Sabha election manifesto here on Friday and its top leaders will be addressing two mega rallies – in Jaipur and Hyderabad – on the next day.

Policeman, gangster killed in J&K gunfight

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU

A police officer and a gangster were killed in a gunfight in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday.

Officials said an encounter between the police and gangsters broke out within the premises of the Government Medical College in Kathua.

The gangsters were being chased by a team of police from the Ramgarh area of Samba district following a tip-off on the movement of members of the Shunoo gang. The gangsters drove into the medical college and exchanged fire with the police on the corridors of the hospital. A gangster, identified as Vasudev, died in the gunfight and another was injured. Sub-Inspector of Police Deepak Sharma also sustained injuries. He died during treatment, officials said.

"The supreme sacrifice of PSI Deepak Sharma will forever be remembered by the nation. The J&K Police stand united in support of the martyr's family, whose commitment and valour will continue to motivate us," J&K Director General of Police R.R. Swain said.

Probe against Kejriwal still at a nascent stage, says ED as it opposes plea against arrest

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Arvind Kejriwal

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday opposed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest and remand in connection with the now-scrapped excise policy-linked money laundering case, saying that its "investigation is at a nascent stage" as far as he was concerned.

"Today, as far as petitioner [Mr. Kejriwal] is concerned, investigation is not over. He has come [to court] at the beginning of investigation when he has just been arrested. Investigation is at a nascent stage," Additional Solicitor-General (ASG) S.V. Raju told Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, who reserved judgment on Mr. Kejriwal's plea.

During the hearing, senior advocate Abhishek M. Singhvi, representing the Chief Minister, questioned the timing of arrest of the AAP national convener ahead of the Lok Sabha election, saying: "This case reeks of timing issues."

"If the first summon is October 30, 2023 in a liquor scam of early 2022 and arrest is of March 2024, then the timing reeks of basic structure issue, level playing field issue, free and fair election issue," Mr. Singhvi argued.

Mr. Raju, appearing for the ED, objected to the allegations emphasising that the probe began in 2022 when there were no elections.

"Take the case of a terrorist who is a politician who has blown up an Army vehicle. He says I've to stand in the elections, so you can't touch me. What kind of an argument is this?" Mr. Raju said.

Mr. Singhvi objected to the analogy terming it "inappropriate".

The ASG said the agency was "not shooting in the dark" and there was Income Tax data, WhatsApp chats and statements of "hawala operators".

"The money trail is there. We have located the money trail. It may be that the money has been used of. The money can't be found. That does not mean that offence of money laundering has not taken place," Mr. Raju said adding that the money was used by the AAP in the 2022 Goa Assembly election.

Our leaders still behind bars, must continue struggle, says Singh after walking out of jail

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

AAP leader Sanjay Singh coming out of Tihar Jail after getting his bail, in New Delhi on Wednesday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Sanjay Singh on Wednesday walked out of jail a day after the Supreme Court granted him bail in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

The Rajya Sabha MP, who was greeted by large crowds and much fanfare, said that though he was free, the AAP still needed to "continue its struggle".

"This is not the time to celebrate. We need to continue our struggle. Our party's senior leaders – Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain – are still behind bars. But I am confident the locks of their prison will be broken soon," he told party workers minutes after walking out jail.

While a Delhi court earlier on Wednesday accepted Mr. Singh's bail bond, it imposed some conditions on his release, including orders to not "tamper with evidence" or "influence witnesses" in the ongoing investigation being carried out by the ED.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of the Rouse Avenue court directed the AAP leader to furnish a bail bond of ₹2 lakh and a surety bond of the same amount, which was deposited by his wife, Anita Singh. Among the other conditions imposed on Mr. Singh were orders that he must keep his Google location services on at all times. Mr. Singh was also made to surrender his passport and is barred from leaving the country. He must also join the investigation as and when required, the judge added.

Zoheb Hossain, special counsel for the ED, submitted that as per a condition set by the Supreme Court, Mr. Singh cannot speak to the media regarding his role in the case.

SC asks Ajit Pawar faction if it has complied with order

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Ajit Pawar group, now declared the "real Nationalist Congress Party", if it has complied with its March 19 order to publish advertisements in the media with a disclaimer that a legal dispute with his uncle Sharad Pawar's faction over the allocation of the party symbol 'clock' is still under way in the top court.

In an oral mentioning before a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant, senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, appearing for the elder Pawar, who founded the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), said that the group led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar was yet to comply with the court order.

"We are in the middle of the election season," Mr. Singhvi pointed out. He said an application filed by the Ajit Pawar faction to relax the March 19 order was actually an attempt to review the court direction.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi urged the court to modify the "last line" of the order. Justice Kant, however, voiced the firm view of the Bench that there was no ambiguity in the order which required clarification. The court said nobody had a right to deliberately misconstrue a court order. The Bench listed the case on Thursday.

Political affiliation does not influence selection process of new Sainik Schools: govt.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In addition to the existing 33 schools, the Ministry had approved proposal for 100 more schools

The scheme for new Sainik Schools is "well thought out" and the "political or ideological affiliation or otherwise" of the applicant institution does not influence the selection process, the Defence Ministry said on Wednesday, responding to some reports.

It stated that attempts to "politicise or distort" the objectives and implementation of the scheme by "casting aspersions on it are unwarranted and misleading".

"The selection process itself is rigorous, checks and balances have been built in to ensure continuing adherence to the objectives," the Ministry said in a statement.

Sainik Schools were established in the 1960s under the Sainik Schools Society (SSS), which is under the Ministry and there are 33 existing schools.

Given the demand for Sainik Schools, the Union Cabinet had in October 2021 approved the proposal for launching 100 Sainik Schools under public-private partnership to be affiliated with the SSS.

Detailing the selection process, the Ministry said the evaluation process includes a School Evaluation Committee comprising the District Magistrate concerned as Chairperson and principals of nearby existing Sainik Schools or Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Physical inspection of the applicant school and verification of the credentials is done as per laid down criteria, it stated, and an approval committee that consists of the Joint Secretary, SSS as Chairperson, Secretary of CBSE and an eminent educationist as members accord the final recommendations.

'Upset' with NC, PDP to fight all three seats in Kashmir Valley

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday said her party will field candidates from all the three Lok Sabha constituencies in the Kashmir Valley, ending any chances of a pre-poll alliance within the Congress-led INDIA bloc.

"Mr. Omar [Abdullah of the National Conference] believes the PDP doesn't exist anywhere. The way Mr. Omar spoke about PDP has anguished my workers, who are not in favour of supporting the NC at this juncture. The consultation is going on and the announcement with regard to the candidates in Kashmir seats will be made soon," Ms. Mufti said.

She said the BJP "dismantled her party by taking away senior leaders". "I was left with my workers, who have been disheartened and disappointed by the comments of Mr. Omar Abdullah," Ms. Mufti said. "The rest depends on the Kashmiri people to whom they want their voices to be heard in Parliament," she added.

The PDP's announcement came days after the NC decided to field a candidate from Muftis' bastion Anantnag-Rajouri. Both the parties are constituents of the INDIA bloc as well as the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).

Meitei body asks CEC, CJI to defer Lok Sabha polls

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Meitei Coordinating Committee, an umbrella body representing Meitei civil society organisations in Manipur, Delhi and abroad, has written to the Chief Election Commissioner and the Chief Justice of India seeking the postponement of the Lok Sabha election in Manipur for the time being, given the ethnic unrest and "abnormal" situation in the State.

"It clearly indicates that these attacks on Meitei are politically motivated. As election has brought relative peace in Manipur, the postponement of the LS election is a prerequisite," the DMCC said.

ELECTIONS 2024

Olympian boxer Vijender quits Cong., joins BJP

Olympic bronze medallist boxer Vijender Singh quit the Congress to join the BJP at its Delhi headquarters on Wednesday, saying that it was "homecoming" for him and it was "good to be back".

He had unsuccessfully contested the South Delhi Lok Sabha election on Congress ticket in 2019. He was considered close to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He was also photographed with Mr. Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. Mr. Singh, a Jat, comes from Bhiwani's Kaluwas village in Haryana and could help the BJP garner support of his community.

The Congress announced Mukesh Dhangar as its candidate from Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. Reports had suggested that the party was considering fielding Mr. Singh from the seat.

Boxer Vijender Singh joining the BJP in Delhi on Wednesday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Om Birla files nomination papers in Kota

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday filed his nomination papers as BJP candidate in Rajasthan's Kota, while expressing confidence about victory in the Lok Sabha elections.

He is a two-time MP from Kota-Bundi constituency. Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, BJP State president C.P. Joshi and State Ministers Kirodi Lal Meena and Madan Dilawar accompanied Mr. Birla during the filing of papers. He earlier addressed a meeting in Jaipur and claimed that the BJP would once again win all the 25 seats in Rajasthan.

Mr. Birla is pitted against firebrand Gujjar leader Prahlad Gunjal, who switched from the BJP to the Congress recently and has received support from his long-time rival and Congress leader of Hadoti, Shanti Dhariwal.

"Why has Rahul Gandhi run away from Amethi seat? He has won from there. He should have had the courage to enter the fight

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
BJP leader

Congress expels Sanjay Nirupam for 'indiscipline'

The Congress on Wednesday expelled former MP Sanjay Nirupam from the party for "indiscipline" and making statements against the party. The action was initiated against him for his remarks against the leadership of the party amid seat-sharing talks with ally Shiv Sena (UBT).

"We give a guarantee that our govt. has always worked for people. The PM talks about Modi *ki* guarantee, but it does not reach people

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE
Congress president

The poll body has made it mandatory that the route march of the Central forces will be uploaded on the district website and CEC's website. DEBASISH BHADURI

Weeks ahead of polls, EC shakes up West Bengal administration

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

With just two weeks to go for the first phase of polling in West Bengal, newly appointed special general observer Alok Sinha arrived in Kolkata on Wednesday.

A notification announcing the appointment of special observers to five States, including West Bengal, was issued by the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday.

The poll body had removed Saumya Roy from the position of Deputy Commissioner of Police (Kolkata South West Division). The IPS officer's wife is Arundhuti Moitra, aka Lovely Moitra, a Trinamool Congress MLA from Sonarpur in South 24 Parganas.

Reacting to the transfer of Mr. Roy, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that if a family member of some officer is in politics, he or she need not be transferred.

Earlier on March 18, the EC had removed West Bengal Director-General of Police Rajeev Kumar. Sanjay Mukherjee has been appointed DGP. As a part of preparations for the Lok Sabha election, the poll body has transferred district magistrates of Purba Medinipur, Jhargram, Purba Bardhaman, and Birbhum.

In the past week, there were changes made in the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, West Bengal with the EC transferring two senior officials – additional chief electoral officer Amit Roy Chowdhury and joint chief electoral officer Rahul Nath.

In an attempt to ensure free and fair elections, the poll body has deployed 177 companies of Central forces in the State by April 1. The poll body has made it mandatory that the route march of the Central forces will be uploaded on the district website and Chief Electoral Officer's website.

Political observer and psephologist Biswanath Chakraborty said that considering the history of political violence in West Bengal, making the details of route march public is a welcome step.

The first phase of Lok Sabha elections will be held across three seats in Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar on April 19.

CARTOONSCAPE | SOUMYADIP SINHA

In T.N., certitudes amid a yen for surprise

The NDA is banking on Modi and prominent candidates, while the AIADMK front is hoping to take advantage of the 'anti-incumbency' factor against the State government; with DMK's alliance remaining cohesive, the numbers are in its favour, but the State is known for springing surprises

IN FOCUS

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

One constant feature of Tamil Nadu politics is that there is no dearth of excitement and, at times, even sensationalism. The Lok Sabha election too is no exception.

The indications of the State headed towards at least a three-cornered contest were evident even in late September when the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), the principal Opposition party, walked out of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and announced that it would form a "mega alliance".

Initially, the AIADMK had anticipated a migration from the coalition headed by the ruling DMK, its *bête noire*, but the latter has remained as cohesive as in the past. Eventually, the AIADMK entered into an electoral understanding with the Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), founded by late actor-politician Vijayakanth, and a few others.

The principal Opposition party has put up candidates in 34 constituencies and they include nominees of its allies who are contesting on its symbol of "Two Leaves". The AIADMK, which had earlier raised the issue of an international drug cartel case, and alleged the DMK's involvement in it, is banking on the "anti-incumbency factor" against the State government on account of inflation and a hike in power tariff, property tax rates and prices of many dairy products. It also does not fail to point out the "failure" of the DMK government in getting exemption for the State from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for medical courses.

Citing the examples of Naveen Patnaik in Odisha and Jagan Mohan Reddy in Andhra Pradesh, the party general secretary, Edappadi K. Palaniswami, who is the lead campaigner for his party and coalition, says there is no need to project anyone for the post of Prime Minister beforehand.

DMK's pitch

For months together, the ruling party has been preparing its members and keeping its machinery ready for the Lok Sabha election. Its opposition to the NEET, three farm laws (since withdrawn) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is all well known. In recent months, it has articulated how Tamil Nadu, like other southern States, is being discriminated against, when it comes to devolution of funds. The ruling party also is extremely upset that the Centre has not provided funds sought by it to tackle the problems caused by floods in parts of the State including Chennai and Thoothukudi. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, the leader of the DMK's front, has been accusing the Union government of having not provided even a rupee for the purpose. He has also been harping on the theme that no real separation has taken place between the BJP and the AIADMK, as the latter, according to him, does not criticise the national party.

Though there were hitches initially in seat sharing among constituents of the DMK-led coalition, leaders of all the parties in the front, especially Mr. Stalin, remained focused in ensuring that the exercise went off smoothly. While the DMK is contesting 22 seats, the Congress has been allotted nine, excluding the lone Puducherry constituency; two Left parties and the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) got two each, and the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) and the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) one each. Though the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), floated by veteran actor Kamal Haasan, is now a part of the DMK's front, it did not get any seat. But it has been assured of one Rajya Sabha seat next year.

Indications of a three-cornered contest were evident even in late September when the AIADMK walked out of BJP-led NDA

The BJP has managed to form a front that includes the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar), Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) and the ousted AIADMK leader O. Panneerselvam. The party State president, K. Annamalai, who has made headlines for his firebrand style of functioning in the last two-and-a-half years, is trying his luck in Coimbatore, a prominent western district, though he hails from Karur in the central region of the State. Union Minister of State L. Murugan is also in the fray, from Nilgiris, despite being a Rajya Sabha member.

Former Governor-Lieutenant Governor of Telangana-Puducherry Tamilisai Soundararajan is seeking election from the prestigious South Chennai constituency and former Union Minister Pon Radhakrishnan has again been fielded in Kanniyakumari. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had visited a few times and a couple of more rounds are likely. The BJP leaders, both at the Centre and in the State, heavily come down on the DMK but Mr. Modi, in his election speeches in the State, did not attack or upset the AIADMK, unlike the State unit president. Mr. Panneerselvam is, for the first time, contesting in the Lok Sabha election from Ramanathapuram, a highly caste-conscious and economically backward area, and T.T.V. Dhinakaran of the AMMK is testing his fortunes in Theni, 20 years after his defeat in the now-abolished Periyakulam constituency.

The BJP has lately invoked the issue of "ceding" of Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka in 1974 as an electoral issue against the DMK and the Congress.

As usual, the Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK), run by film actor-director Seeman, has fielded his colleagues in all the 40 constituencies including Puducherry, giving 50% of the seats to women.

Arithmetic strength and the divided Opposition should naturally benefit the ruling combination but electors of Tamil Nadu are not unknown for causing surprises.

Past results

A lowdown on the party-wise performance in Tamil Nadu in the 2019 Lok Sabha election

Victory cheers: DMK party members celebrate the party's win in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. AFP

Party	Seats Contested	won	Votes	Vote %
DMK+	39	38	2.3 crore	53.2
DMK	24	24	1.4 crore	33.5
Congress	9	8	54 lakh	12.6
CPI	2	2	10.3 lakh	2.4
CPI-M	2	2	10.2 lakh	2.4
AIADMK+	39	1	1.3 crore	30.6
AIADMK	23	1	83.1 lakh	19.4
VCK	1	1	5 lakh	1.2
IUML	1	1	4.7 lakh	1.1
AMMK	38	0	22.3 lakh	5.2
NTK	37	0	16.7 lakh	3.9
MNM	36	0	15.8 lakh	3.7
PMK	7	0	23 lakh	5.4
BJP	5	0	15.5 lakh	3.6

Purnea may witness a triangular fight as RJD candidate Bima Bharati files papers

Amit Bhelari
PURNEA

Ending speculation, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) candidate Bima Bharati on Wednesday filed nomination papers for the Purnea Lok Sabha seat in the presence of RJD leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav.

Rajesh Ranjan, alias Pappu Yadav, who joined the Congress recently, will in all likelihood contest the seat as an Independent after RJD supremo Lalu Prasad ignored his appeal to forego the seat in favour of the Congress.

Mr. Pappu Yadav had earlier merged his Jan Adhikar Party (Loktantrik) with the Congress and on Monday had requested Mr. Prasad to leave the seat for the Congress. When Ms. Bharati was filing her nomination papers, Mr. Pappu Yadav was busy campaigning in the constituency. As soon as he came to know about the development, he expressed his disappointment as he had continuously staked claim to contest from Purnea.

Alliance troubles: Rajesh Ranjan, alias Pappu Yadav, campaigning in Purnea on Wednesday. AMIT BHELARI

Now, it appears likely that the seat will witness a triangular fight after Ms. Bharati's nomination. NDA ally Janata Dal (U) has repeated Santosh Kushwaha from the seat.

As per the seat-sharing pact in the *mahagathbandhan* (grand alliance) in Bihar, the RJD is contesting 26 seats, the Congress nine and the Left parties five. The RJD has claimed Purnea under its quota.

"When other RJD candidates filed nomination papers, Tejashwi Yadav did not accompany them. Why only in Purnea? It clearly indicates he wants to hurt me. It also proves RJD's hatred towards me. Did I ever make any attempt to harm the RJD family? Why they are so afraid of me and determined to prevent me from contesting election on Congress ticket? Tejashwi Yadav has snatched my mother seat [Purnea], he snatched the seat [Begusarai] of Kanhaiya Kumar, he snatched the seat [Aurangabad] of [Congress leader] Nikhil Kumar," Mr. Pappu Yadav told *The Hindu*.

Seat distribution in the grand alliance has led to murmurs in the Congress that the RJD is trying to "corner the party" in the State. Last Sunday, Anil Kumar Sharma, senior leader and former Bihar Congress president, had quit the party levelling serious allegations against the RJD.

Mr. Sharma raised the issue of Congress getting just nine seats in the alliance despite the fact that in the last Lok Sabha election, the Congress was the only ally to win a seat while the RJD had lost all 26.

It was believed that Mr. Pappu Yadav merged his party with the Congress after reaching consensus that he would be getting the Purnea seat. However, before the formal announcement of candidates, Mr. Prasad had given ticket to Ms. Bharati adding more controversy.

After Ms. Bharati filed her nomination, at a public meeting in Purnea Mr. Tejashwi attacked Mr. Pappu Yadav without taking his name by saying many "*vote-katwa*" (divider of votes) will come but people should not fall into their trap.

EC reviews law and order in States and Union Territories

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Wednesday met with top officials of all States and Union Territories to assess the law-and-order situation ahead of the Lok Sabha election in order to prevent illicit activities and ensure strict vigilance along inter-State boundaries and international borders.

The meet chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, along with Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, was also attended by officials from Central agencies guarding the borders.

The commission reviewed in detail critical issues pertaining to each State and U.T. Mr. Kumar called upon all stakeholders to work together to uphold the integrity of the electoral process.

Some of the key issues discussed during the meeting included the need for enhanced coordination among neighbouring States and Union Territories, diligent deployment of Central forces, and the identification and monitoring of flashpoints in border areas that may have ramifications on the election process, the poll body said.

Strict vigilance

It underscored the importance of strict vigilance to curb the movement of contraband items, including narcotics, liquor, arms, and explosives across international borders.

Directions were given for adequate security measures to safeguard political functionaries and candidates based on threat perception, particularly in Chhattisgarh and J&K.

The recent violence and turmoil in Manipur and implications for conducting peaceful polls were also addressed, with the EC urging swift action to assist internally displaced persons and ensure their participation in the election.

INBRIEF

7 die of suffocation after fire at tailoring shop in Maharashtra

Seven persons, including two children, died of suffocation after a fire broke out in a tailoring shop in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar city on Wednesday, a senior police official said. The blaze erupted around 4 a.m. in the shop located at Dana Bazar in the Cantonment area. The tailoring shop and other commercial establishments were located on the ground floor of a building while people were residing on the upper floor, the official said. "The police came to know about the incident at 4.15 a.m. Following the fire, smoke entered the first floor where a family was residing," Police Commissioner Manoj Lohiya said. PTI

Central database on heatwave impact needed: Mandaviya

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Wednesday stressed the need for a central database with inputs from the States to share field-level data on heatwaves that would include deaths and cases, so a realistic assessment can be made. The Health Minister chaired a meeting to review public health preparedness for management of heat-related illness on Wednesday. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, and Dr. V.K. Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, participated in the meeting. "Timely, and widespread awareness among people on preventive measures will reduce the impact of such heat waves,'' the Minister said. He advised senior officials to meet their counterparts in States to promote better coordination.

Nuclear power is key to development, says study

India must prioritise investment in this energy sector and expand related infrastructure if it is to be on track to become developed nation by 2047 and achieve net zero by 2070, says IIM-A report

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Larger goals: Currently, nuclear energy makes up only 1.6% of India's energy mix. FILE PHOTO

For India to be a developed country by 2047 and be on track to achieve net zero – or effectively zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2070 – it must significantly prioritise investments in nuclear energy and expand related infrastructure, says a study by academics at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

The results of the study, funded by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India, were made public on Wednesday. Currently, nuclear energy makes up only 1.6% of India's energy mix.

The report postulates several scenarios. These are a high-, medium-, and low-economic growth scenario, a scenario where there is a "thrust" on nuclear energy, another with a thrust on expanding fossil fuel use along with employing carbon capture and storage, a scenario with an emphasis on renewable energy (solar, wind), and finally one that combines all of these.

The authors used mathematical models to estimate what proportion of various sources of energy would be required by 2030 and 2050 to arrive at an ideal scenario of net zero emissions by 2070. This was further tempered by scenarios of India's population achieving a human development index like Western European countries and the price of access to energy going down.

The best case, their calculations showed, were where emissions in 2070 fell to 0.55 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide ('net zero' scenario). This translated to nuclear power rising five-fold from today's levels to 30 GW (gigawatt) by 2030 and 265 GW by 2050. To put in perspective, it means nuclear power contributing 4% of India's total energy by 2030 and sharply rising to 30% by 2050. In the same scenario, the share of solar power falls from 42% in 2030 to 30% in 2050.

Uranium availability

Currently, figures from the Central Electricity Authority say solar energy accounts for 16% of India's installed generation capacity and coal 49%. To achieve these idealistic figures for nuclear energy would require a doubling of investments as well as the assumption that uranium, a critical fuel but restricted by international embargo, is available in necessary quantities.

The authors, led by Professor Amit Garg of IIM, Ahmedabad, said at a press conference that there was no "silver bullet" to achieve net zero and "myriad technologies needed to coexist" in India's energy basket.

Coal would likely be the "backbone" of the Indian energy system and if the country has to phase down coal in the next three decades, it would need to build adequate infrastructure for alternative sources such as nuclear power, in addition to flexible grid infrastructure and storage to support the integration of renewable energy.

Overall, India would need close to ₹150-200 lakh crore between 2020-2070 to finance these transitions, the report added.

India rejects report on abusive conditions at shrimp hatcheries

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India is one of the world's largest shrimp exporters.

India, the biggest supplier of shrimp, U.S.'s favourite seafood, has strongly refuted allegations of human rights and environmental abuses raised by a Chicago-based human rights group. Top Commerce Ministry officials will meet seafood exporters on Thursday to discuss efforts to scotch such attempts at maligning its global reputation.

In 2022-23, India's seafood exports stood at $8.09 billion, or ₹64,000 crore, and shrimps accounted for a bulk of these exports at $5.6 billion. India has emerged as one of the world's largest shrimp exporters and its share in the U.S. market has risen from 21%, or $1.3 billion, to 40% in 2022-23, with shipments worth $2.4 billion, far ahead of rivals such as Thailand, China, Vietnam, and Ecuador.

Terming a report from Corporate Accountability Lab (CAL) that alleges "dangerous and abusive" working conditions in some shrimp hatcheries, growing ponds, and peeling sheds, as baseless, a senior official asserted that the entire value chain for India's shrimp exports is certified by the Marine Products Export Development Authority and there is no scope for such concerns about overseas shipments. "This seems to be driven by vested interests aimed at maligning the reputation of our aquaculture sector and its products in global markets," he noted.

About a lakh shrimp farms in Andhra Pradesh alone account for almost 70% of India's shrimp output. Women are reckoned to account for 70% of the eight million-odd jobs in the sector, including two lakh in hatcheries and aquaculture farms, and the rest in processing and freezing units.

The Ministry is likely to advise exporters to commission independent studies on the working conditions at shrimp farms to dispel the concerns in major markets like the U.S. and the EU.

It has also asked the Andhra Pradesh government to look into the allegations made in the CAL report.

Three RTI activists booked for 'spreading' fake news

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha police have booked cases under several Sections of the Indian Penal Code.

The Commissionerate Police for Bhubaneswar-Cuttack has filed cases against three Right to Information activists who alleged that 74 police personnel were deployed for the protection of V.K. Pandian, Chairman, 5T (Transformational Initiatives), and a close aide of Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

RTI activist Pradip Pradhan, Prakash Dash, and Srikant Pakal have been booked under Sections 419, 420, 465, 468, 469, 471, 505 (1)(a)(b)/34 of the Indian Penal Code for allegedly spreading fake news. The case has been filed at the Saheed Nagar police station.

On March 30, the RTI activists held a press conference in Bhubaneswar, where they said that the number of police personnel deployed for the security of Mr. Pandian was unusually high. They quoted purported information obtained through an RTI query.

The police have dismissed the claim stating that no such reply had been supplied to any RTI applicant. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar, Prateek Singh had said, "We are assessing the veracity of the purported letter."

At the press conference conducted by the Odisha Soochna Adhikar Abhijan (OSSA), Mr. Dash said that the Reserve Inspector of Police, Bhubaneswar, had informed that two armed sub-inspectors, 11 havildars, 53 constables, and four women constables in addition to a protection vehicle were deployed for Mr. Pandian's security. The issue triggered massive controversy as the BJP raised the issue before the Chief Electoral Officer.

Reacting to the registration of cases, the activists stuck to their claims. "We have not produced any manufactured information. The letter we quoted did exist," Mr. Pradhan, convener of the OSAA, claimed.

U.P. police constable exam paper leak mastermind arrested

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh police on Wednesday said it arrested the alleged mastermind of the police constable recruitment examination 2023 paper leak. Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Amitabh Yash said that Rajiv Nayan Mishra was arrested by the Special Task Force (STF), from the Pari Chowk locality in Greater Noida, late on Tuesday evening.

"It comes to our notice during the investigation that the accused also booked a resort in Rewa for aspirants to read out the question paper," reads the STF statement.

The name of the accused is added in the First Information Report (FIR) registered under sections 419 (punishment for cheating by personation), 420 (cheating by inducement), 467 (forgery of valuable documents), 468 (forgery for cheating), and 471 (using as genuine a forged document) of the Indian Penal Code.

"Earlier, Rajiv was arrested in connection with a paper leak of nursing staff recruitment under NHM in Bhopal and was sent to Gwalior jail," the STF said.

More than 48.17 lakh aspirants had filed the form to appear in the written test which took place at 2,385 centres across the State on February 17 and 18, but Uttar Pradesh government on February 24 cancelled the examination following allegations.

3 more bodies of Naxalites recovered in Bijapur district

Press Trust of India
RAIPUR

Arms and ammunition recovered by security personnel during an encounter with Naxalites, in Bijapur district on Wednesday. PTI

Three more bodies of Naxalites were recovered on Wednesday morning in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district where a fierce encounter took place between security personnel and Naxalites the previous day, the police said.

With this, the number of Naxalites killed in the gun battle on Tuesday has risen to 13, they said.

Following the major anti-insurgency operation ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the police on Tuesday found bodies of 10 Naxalites, including a woman. During the search operation still under way in the area, the bodies of three more Naxalites were recovered on Wednesday morning from a dense forest where the encounter took place, a senior police official said.

"The identity of the dead Naxalites was yet to be ascertained but *prima facie*, it appears that they belonged to the PLGA [People's Liberation Guerrilla Army] company no. 2 of Maoists," the official said.

On Tuesday, the gunfight broke out between security forces and Naxalites around 6 a.m. in the forest between Lendra and Korcholi villages, where a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation.

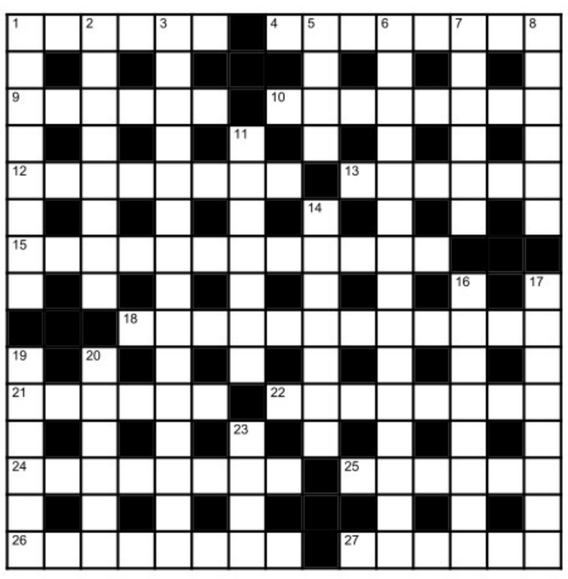
The intermittent firing lasted for a long time and the security forces continued search operations in the area. A light machine gun (LMG), a .303 rifle, a 12-bore gun were also seized from the spot, the police had said earlier.

TH CROSSWORD + 14140

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Criminal aim to involve police state (6)
4 Let husband first, greatly honoured (8)
9 Delight as gunners want to be heard (6)
10 Arms dealer's own involvement in land (8)
12 Girl embracing star in US city (3,5)
13 Ridicules make women in the family get tense to start with (6)
15 Stood moaning, refused capital (5,7)
18 What you will say for this romantic comedy? (7,5)
21 Give in when on fast (6)
22 "Went into dock"- a complaint from the very beginning (5,3)
24 Fire noticed from the east of the mountain range (8)
25 Call amount comes shortly a day after (6)
26 At home dividing a country (8)
27 Penicillin shot, it is to stop inflammation (6)

Down

1 Test stopped, limited visibility - he says it's the right thing (8)
2 People like to listen to it, but there is nothing on air (4-4)
3 Saw two tenants shifting into a town, perhaps (5,3,4,3)
5 One's sardonic and crooked (4)
6 Unfailing growth, ridiculously easy picking (3,7,5)
7 Question about a boozer, it comes straight from the horse's mouth (6)
8 Changing tides gather force, understand that (6)
11 Display collection (7)
14 Paid regularly with pilfered gold coin (7)
16 Timely restriction can become enigmatical (3,5)
17 Small suggestions, getting close to regular payments (8)
19 Short legal document, taking blame for booze? (6)
20 Extremely colourful, another extract from grapes? (6)
23 Some of these make engineers cry (4)

SUDOKU

		5		7	6			
	2				1			8
		3	5				6	
		7	8	5				9
		1				8		
9				6	2	5		
	9				7	1		
8			4				2	
			9	8		6		

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

		T		F		N		P		E		V
	R	E	A	L	I	S	E		A	I	R	M	A	N
	A		L		S		X		T		S		R	
A	D	M	I	T	S			T	U	R	N	A	W	A	Y
	I		S		U				O		T		N	
C	O	M	M	E	R	C	I	A	L		Z	E	A	L
			A		E		N					S		
S	P	I	N		S	E	D	A	N		Q	U	I	T
	L						I		O		U			
J	E	T	S		A	V	A	N	T	G	A	R	D	E
	A		K		N				I		N		A	
A	S	S	E	S	S	O	R		O	B	T	A	I	N
	U		T		W		O		N		I		S	
O	R	A	C	L	E		W	E	A	L	T	H	Y	
	E		H		R		S		L		Y			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	1	9	6	7	5	3	4
3	9	4	2	5	8	6	1	7
7	6	5	4	3	1	2	8	9
2	7	9	3	4	6	8	5	1
6	4	8	1	7	5	3	9	2
1	5	3	8	2	9	4	7	6
5	3	7	6	9	2	1	4	8
4	8	2	7	1	3	9	6	5
9	1	6	5	8	4	7	2	3

FAITH

Rama, the poorna avatar

The Ramayana is considered the highest epic and one easily accessible to all.

The Ramayana, which narrates the avatar of Emperuman, is itself the Vedas, said Dhamal Perundevi in a discourse.

Valmiki named it succinctly as Ramayana, by taking the syllables from the four Vedas. From Rig Veda, he used the syllable 'Ra', 'Ma' from Sama Veda, 'Ya' from Yajur Veda and 'Na' from Atharvana Veda, in his compilation of the epic of 24,000 verses.

The Gayatri mantra has 24 syllables and at the start of every 1,000th verse, the sage used a syllable from Gayatri. The work has been blessed by Brahma, while Narada extended his guidance in order to ensure devotees experience in full the sterling qualities of Rama.

After compiling the epic, the question of how to reach it to the people arose and Luv and Khush rose to the task.

It is said that avatar is the act of descent of God in order to help man ascend towards Him. Rama and Krishna avatars are referred to as poorna avatars: in both of them God stayed on for many years, before and after accomplishing the purpose of His manifestation.

As Rama, He stayed on to establish Ram Rajya in Ayodhya, the incomparable city.

INBRIEF

Toyota unveils Urban Cruiser Taisor A-SUV at ₹7.73 lakh

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on Wednesday introduced the all-new Toyota Urban Cruiser Taisor, making a re-entry into A-segment (entry level) SUVs. The vehicle is available in 1.0L Turbo option in six variants at a starting price of ₹10.55 lakh (ex showroom), and 1.2L petrol option in six variants at a starting price of ₹7.73 lakh (ex showroom). The vehicle will also be available in CNG. Bookings opened on Wednesday and deliveries will start from May 2024, TKM said.

Ramco Cements doubles Odisha unit capacity to 1.8 mtpa

Ramco Cements Ltd. has doubled the cement manufacturing capacity of its grinding unit in Odisha to 1.8 million tonnes per annum (mtpa). On Monday, the company commissioned its Line II and commenced commercial production at its unit in Jajpur district of Odisha. The manufacturing capacity of Line II is 0.90 mtpa, the cement major said in a filing. An 18 MW thermal power plant in Kolimigundla and a railway siding would be commissioned soon.

VIL gets shareholders' nod to raise up to ₹20,000 crore

Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL) on Wednesday said its shareholders had approved a proposal to raise up to ₹20,000 crore by issuance of securities. An extraordinary general meeting (EGM) seeking shareholders' nod for raising capital was held on Tuesday. In a BSE filing, VIL informed about the voting results of the EGM, where 99.01% of the overall votes were cast in favour of the resolution pertaining to "issuance of securities up to an aggregate amount of ₹20,000 crore". PTI

HC nixes GST notice to Maersk staff

The Bombay High Court strikes down ₹3,731 cr. demand by GST officials against employees of global logistics major Maersk for alleged tax evasion; the judgment could bring relief to other employees at companies embroiled in GST disputes

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Should an employee of a company be held responsible for forking out penalties related to tax demands raised on the company by revenue authorities?

Goods and Services Tax officials believed so when they slapped a demand last September for a ₹3,731 crore penalty on a taxation manager and other employees of global logistics major Maersk for alleged tax evasion of the same amount by the company.

In a judgment that could bring relief to other employees at firms in the midst of GST disputes, the Bombay High Court last week struck down the demand and show cause notices issued by the Directorate General of Goods and Service Tax Intelligence in the case, terming them bad and illegal.

Terming it "highly unconscionable and disproportionate" for revenue officers to hold employees responsible for liabilities of the company, a division bench of Justice G.S. Kulkarni and Justice Firdosh P. Pooniwalla held it would not be incorrect to contend that the purpose of issuing the show cause notice to the petitioner who is merely an employee, was designed to threaten and pressurise them.

GST officials had alleged that a sum of ₹1,561 crore was wrongly utilised as Input Tax Credit by Maersk and those credits were wrongfully distributed.

While Maersk is a foreign company which does not have any employee or fixed establishment in India, solely for the purpose of representing and acting on its behalf before the Indian tax authorities, the firm had given the power of attorney to some employees of its steamer agent in India.

"This ruling is significant for employees of large businesses, where potentially interpretative GST positions are adopted by employees without any malafide intention," said Abhishek Jain, KPMG's indirect tax head.

Court's pushback

The High Court ruling notes that employees cannot be ordered to pay tax penalties imposed on companies

- GST officials had alleged that a sum of ₹1,561 crore was wrongly utilised as Input Tax Credit by Maersk
- Bombay HC says it is disproportionate for revenue officers to hold employees responsible for Maersk's liabilities
- Maersk is a foreign company, which does not have any employee or fixed establishment in India

Vistara CEO apologises to pilots for taxing schedules, seeks support

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Battling a surge of flight cancellations following unrest among pilots ahead of the merger with Air India, Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan held a town hall meeting where he apologised to pilots for 'taxing schedules' and sought their support in resolving concerns.

Mr. Kannan sought to address rostering issues that were resulting in long working hours for the pilots, and stressful combinations of flights, and assured them the airline would take measures to ensure a better work-life balance even if it entailed a commercial hit.

Vinod Kannan

"We will take steps to make roster less taxing in a more rigorous fashion," Mr. Kannan said during the 25-minute town hall where he also fielded questions directly from the pilots.

He said since March 31 the airline had seen more than 150 flight cancellations and 200 flight delays of longer than two hours but said that proactive cancellation of flights on April 3 and 4 was expected to bring back normalcy. He said the cancellations would continue till the end of the month to create a pilot buffer.

He denied that a section of pilots had reported sick to protest the new pay structure announced in mid-February and instead he sought to blame ATC delays, groundings due to bird hits and engine failure, and a hectic roster where pilots had exceeded their maximum limit of permissible flight hours as well as a lack of a pilot buffer, which he said had "snowballed" into a large number of cancellations.

Instances of pilots calling in sick at the end of a financial year were common as crew want to utilise unused leave, which he said was "the final straw that broke the camel's back".

On the contentious new pay structure, the CEO said while some pilots 'were unhappy', the move was in the interest of the "wider community". He, however, invited pilots to convey their concerns directly to him and assured a reply.

RBI's forex derivatives stance said to be unchanged

Reuters
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has not materially changed its stance on exchange-traded rupee derivatives, two sources aware of the RBI's thinking said.

The RBI had said in January that from April, exchanges may offer forex derivative contracts involving the rupee to users "for the purpose of hedging contracted exposure."

"The underlying exposure requirement was always there. There has been no change in that," the first source said.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	73,877	-0.03
US Dollar	83.53	-0.13
Gold	69,200	1.21
Brent oil	89.74	1.46

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3233.45	-35.30
Adani Ports	1397.20	-6.95
Apollo Hosp	6375.05	-44.70
Asian Paints	2869.35	-4.85
Axis Bank	1063.25	16.05
Bajaj Auto	9080.45	-195.65
Bajaj Finserv	1640.35	-16.20
Bajaj Finance	7309.25	101.85
Bharti Airtel	1225.70	17.45
BPCL	610.95	-4.85
Britannia Ind	4834.60	-65.35
Cipla	1471.50	-17.90
Coal India	445.50	2.30
Divis Lab	3684.90	62.40
Dr Reddys Lab	6124.40	-113.15
Eicher Motors	3934.20	12.00
Grasim Ind	2305.45	-0.85
HCL Tech	1535.85	7.55
HDFC Bank	1482.30	2.15
HDFC Life	624.10	-7.80
Hero MotoCorp	4557.20	-3.60
Hindalco	576.60	5.40
Hind Unilever	2265.20	-21.50
ICICI Bank	1077.20	-4.00
IndusInd Bank	1542.65	-16.75
Infosys	1480.65	-2.20
ITC	425.20	-0.65
JSW Steel	869.00	-10.25
Kotak Bank	1731.15	-26.25
L&T	3782.45	-24.95
LTIMindtree Ltd.	4869.30	-31.45
M&M	1989.30	17.35
Maruti Suzuki	12427.85	-124.60
NestleIndia	2553.95	-69.35
NTPC	351.25	6.45
ONGC	275.35	2.85
PowerGrid Corp	280.10	0.55
Reliance Ind	2943.20	-30.70
SBI Life	1460.80	-9.80
State Bank	771.05	4.65
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2556.45	90.50
Sun Pharma	1619.85	-2.40
TataConsumerProduct	1119.50	-11.65
Tata Motors	1009.15	4.50
Tata Steel	163.65	-1.00
TCS	3947.30	63.50
Tech Mahindra	1255.15	18.35
Titan	3712.50	-43.45
UltraTech Cement	10001.90	-36.25
Wipro	483.20	2.00

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 03

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.24	83.56
Euro	89.64	89.99
British Pound	104.61	105.01
Japanese Yen (100)	54.86	55.07
Chinese Yuan	11.50	11.55
Swiss Franc	91.59	91.95
Singapore Dollar	61.56	61.80
Canadian Dollar	61.30	61.54
Malaysian Ringitt	17.50	17.58
Australian Dollar	54.15	54.37

Source:Indian Bank

India plans to build first commercial crude storage

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India plans to build its first commercial crude oil strategic storage as part of efforts to shore up stockpiles as insurance against any supply disruption.

Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd. (ISPRL), an SPV created by the government for building and operating strategic petroleum reserves in the country, has invited bids for constructing 2.5 million tonnes of underground storage at Padur in Karnataka, according to the tender document.

ISPRL had in the first phase built a strategic petroleum reserve in underground unlined rock caverns at three locations.

Top 4 EV producers sold over 50% of e-vehicles in March

N. Anand
CHENNAI

The Indian electric two-wheeler segment posted highest monthly sales in March 2024 over the year earlier period, with the top four original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) accounting for more than 50% of total sales, according to Vahan portal.

Ola Electric, TVS Motor, Bajaj Auto and Ather Energy cumulatively sold 1.12 lakh out of 1.36 lakh units. The new entrant Kinetic Green sold almost 4,000 units and secured sixth slot among the top 10 players, said industry sources.

In the comparable period, the top 10 OEMs, barring Kinetic Green, sold 93,000 vehicles.

Ola Electric recorded highest monthly sales for the fifth consecutive month at over 53,000 scooters. The market leader achieved a YoY growth of 115% in FY24 with 328,785 units. In Q4, it grew by 42% with 119,310 units, it said in a statement.

TVS Motor Company stood in the second position by retailing 26,466 units against 16,901 units.

High crude oil prices a cause for concern, says official

Reuters
NEW DELHI

Rising crude oil prices are a cause for concern for the world's third-largest importer of the commodity, India's Oil Secretary Pankaj Jain said on Wednesday.

'Geopolitical premium'

As a consuming nation, any increase in prices will cause concern and anxiety, Mr. Jain said at an industry event, referring to the "geopolitical premium" in crude prices.

If oil prices continue to stay higher for a month longer, oil marketing companies will take an appropriate decision, the Secretary said, when asked if there is a case for increasing retail fuel prices.

Virgin Atlantic CEO announces fifth daily India-U.K. flight

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Virgin Atlantic announced its fifth flight to India with a second daily connection between Mumbai and London from October 2024.

CEO Shai Weiss said, "We see infinite demand out of India. Why? Because I think only 7% of the population have a passport. The number of trips for every 100 people in India is probably around one and a half international trips outbound out of India. China is five times that."

Wednesday's announcement comes days after the airline's maiden flight between Bengaluru and London on March 31.

The airline is awaiting an increase in bilateral seat capacity for its second flight from Mumbai. That would give the carrier a more than fourfold growth in capacity since 2019.

'Hologram, blockchain can curb fake drugs'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Hologram and blockchain technology should be used as major tools to prevent the sale of counterfeit drugs in the market, said Sheetal Arora, CEO, Mankind Pharma Ltd.

"Holograms and security labels embedded with advanced anti-counterfeiting features (3D holographic images, unique patterns and micro-text) are the most difficult to replicate," Mr. Arora said. "Similarly, blockchain improves traceability via end-to-end tracking of shipments," he wrote in a note detailing measures to curb this growing menace.

Sheetal Arora

Curbing fake drugs assumes importance when the Indian pharmaceutical industry, worth $50 billion in 2023, is likely to touch $130 billion by 2030.

According to WHO estimates, almost 10.5% of the medications sold across the world are either substandard or fake.

THE HINDU GROUP
ENGLISH LEARNING IS NOW CHILD'S PLAY
STEP presents a fun-filled learning course for kids from classes 4 to 7.
STEP Live Junior has interactive exercises, tests, polls, quizzes and a lot more to hold your child's attention and help them confidently communicate in English.
Special summer batch starts on 22nd April, on all weekdays.
Focus on grammar & vocabulary
Syllabus that is never taught in school
Fun-filled 1-hour class per day
Entertaining exercises and tests
Child-friendly context
Scan the QR code
Timing:
11:00 am to 12:00 noon
To know more,
visit BIT.LY/SJUNIOR
STEP LIVE Junior
GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

PHNOM PENH

Former Cambodia leader Hun Sen becomes senate president

AFP

Former Cambodian leader Hun Sen became senate president on Wednesday, taking over a key ceremonial role less than a year after handing power to his son. Hun Sen had stepped down in August after four decades of iron-fisted rule. The new position allows Hun Sen to act as acting head of state when the king is overseas. AFP

HARARE

Zimbabwe President declares El Nino drought a national disaster

AP

Zimbabwe declared drought a national disaster on Wednesday, with President Emmerson Mnangagwa saying the country needed $2 billion in aid to help millions of people who are going hungry. A severe dry spell induced by the El Nino weather pattern is wreaking havoc across southern Africa. AFP.

BANGKOK

Thailand's top court accepts case seeking to dissolve reformist party

AFP

Thailand's Constitutional Court agreed on Wednesday to hear a case seeking the dissolution of the reformist Move Forward Party over its campaign pledge to reform the kingdom's tough royal defamation laws. The country's election commission had moved the court last month quoting the party's poll vow. AFP

KAMPALA

Uganda court rejects challenge to controversial anti-gay law

REUTERS

Uganda's Constitutional Court on Wednesday rejected a bid to scrap a controversial anti-gay law that is considered one of the toughest in the world. It imposes penalties of up to life in prison for consensual same-sex relations and contains provisions that make "aggravated homosexuality" an offence punishable by death. AFP

Nine dead, 1,000 injured as 7.4-strong quake hits Taiwan

It was the strongest earthquake to have struck the island in the past 20 years; strict building regulations and widespread public disaster awareness believed to have staved off a catastrophe

Agence France-Presse
TAIPEI

At least nine persons were killed and more than 1,000 injured on Wednesday by a powerful earthquake in Taiwan that damaged dozens of buildings and prompted tsunami warnings that extended to Japan and the Philippines before being lifted.

Dozens of people were believed safe but unreachable in areas cut off by massive landslides triggered by the quake.

Strict building regulations and widespread public disaster awareness appear to have staved off a catastrophe for the earthquake-prone island, which lies near the junction of two tectonic plates.

Crumbled blocks: A damaged building in New Taipei City, after a major earthquake hit Taiwan's east on Wednesday. AFP

The quake was the strongest since one of 7.6-magnitude struck in September 1999, killing around 2,400 people in the deadliest natural disaster in the island's history.

Wednesday's magnitude-7.4 quake hit just before 8:00 am local time (0000 GMT), with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) putting the epicentre 18 km south of Taiwan's Hualien City, at a depth of 34.8 km.

Three people among a group of seven on an early-morning hike were crushed to death by boulders loosened by the earthquake.

Separately, the drivers of a truck and a car died when their vehicles were hit by tumbling rocks, while another man died at a mine quarry. The National Fire Agency did not immediately offer details on the other three deaths, but said all the fatalities had been in Hualien county, adding that 1,011 people had been injured.

To attack or to restrain: Israel's strikes leave Iran in a strategic dilemma

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

"We are in a multi-front war, offensively and defensively," Israel's Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said on Tuesday, a day after Israeli warplanes attacked an annex of Iran's Embassy in Damascus, killing at least 13, including a senior Iranian General. A few days earlier, Israel had attacked a weapons depot in northern Syria, killing at least 38 Syrian soldiers and half a dozen Hezbollah fighters. "We are acting everywhere and every day to prevent the strengthening of our enemies," Mr. Gallant declared.

Since October 7, when Hamas, carried out a cross-border attack in Israel, killing at at least 1,200 people, Israel has conducted dozens of air strikes in Syria and Lebanon, besides its full-throttled invasion of the Hamas-run Gaza Strip, hitting Iranian, Syrian and Hezbollah targets.

Octopus doctrine

Israel sees Iran as its main enemy – the meeting point of all anti-Israel non-state actors in West Asia, be it Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis or the Islamic Jihad. Its post-October 7 military response has two sides. One, continue the war in Gaza until Hamas's military capabilities are destroyed and two, step up the shadow war with Iran. As former Prime Minister Naftali Bennett once put it, Israel sees Iran as the head of the octopus, while the militias are its tentacles. Israel is now attacking both the head and the tentacles simultaneously.

Mohammad Reza Zahedi

Nearly six months of fighting in Gaza has isolated Israel internationally. The high civilian toll in Gaza – over 32,000 Palestinians have been killed – has triggered an international outcry. The UN Security Council passed a resolution last month, demanding an immediate ceasefire. The Biden administration continues to back Israel militarily, but there is a growing uneasiness in the diplomatic relationship between the two countries.

As the Gaza war grinds on, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is under growing pressure at home to resign and call for an early vote, seems eager to escalate the regional confrontation with Iran. The attack on the embassy annex, which has been labelled as the consular section, was clearly a major escalation in the Israel-Iran shadow war.

The message Israel is sending to Iran is clear. Israel has exact intelligence on the movement of senior Iranian military figures. And they are not safe anywhere in Syria (and Lebanon). In other words, Israel seems determined to fight Iran's influence in its neighbourhood even at the risk of an open conflict.

Muted response

In the past, Iran's response to these Israeli attacks has been muted, for two possible reasons. One, Iran does not want to give Israel what it wants – an open regional war. It would rather wait and see how Israel manages the mess in Gaza, while pro-Iran militias would keep needling Israel on the borders. Two, Iran's military doctrine is rooted in avoiding direct confrontation with bigger powers. It knows that an open war with Israel would be disastrous for the whole region and it could draw the U.S. also into the war. So there is a strong argument in favour of strategic restraint.

But on the other side, every time Israel carries out a strike against Iran, it drills holes into the Islamic Republic's deterrence. Iran's inability or refusal to respond militarily empowers Israel further.

Gen. Mohammad Reza Zahedi, who was killed in the Damascus consulate attack, was a top Quds Force commander of the IRGC's Syria operations. If Iran cannot respond to an attack on its consulate that killed a top General, it may not be the last such attack Iran faces in Syria or Lebanon. This leaves the Mullahs in Tehran in a dilemma. They have to respond to Israel's attacks to bolster Iran's weak deterrence. But they have to do so without triggering an open war with Israel.

UNHRC to discuss call for Israel arms embargo

Agence France-Presse
GENEVA

The UN Human Rights Council will consider a draft resolution on Friday calling for an arms embargo on Israel, citing the "plausible risk of genocide in Gaza".

If the draft resolution is adopted, it would mark the first time that the United Nations' top rights body has taken a position on the war raging in Gaza.

The text condemns "the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects by Israel" in populated areas of Gaza.

The draft resolution was brought forward by Pakistan on behalf of 55 of the 56 UN member states in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) – the exception being Albania. The text is co-sponsored by Bolivia, Cuba and the Palestinian mission in Geneva.

The eight-page draft demands Israel end its occupation of Palestinian territory and immediately lifts its "illegal blockade" on the Gaza Strip. It calls upon countries to stop the sale or transfer of arms, munitions and other military equipment to Israel.

The draft also "condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare", calls for an immediate ceasefire and "condemns Israeli actions that may amount to ethnic cleansing".

The draft being brought in Geneva calls on states to ensure that UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, receives sufficient funding and demands Israel stop expanding settlements in Palestinian territories.

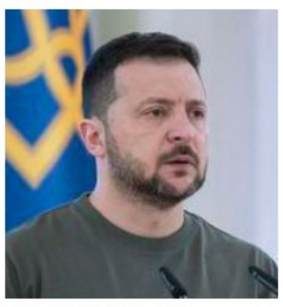
Ukraine's new law lowers conscription age to 25 in a bid to replenish troops

Associated Press
KYIV

Ukraine on Wednesday lowered the military conscription age from 27 to 25 in an effort to replenish its depleted ranks after more than two years of war following Russia's full-scale invasion.

The new mobilisation law came into force a day after Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed it. Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, passed it last year.

It was not immediately clear why Mr. Zelenskyy took so long to sign the measure into law. He made only a brief public comment about it at a news conference in Kyiv on Wednesday with Finnish President Alexander Stubb.



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

An audit requested by Ukraine's recently appointed commander in chief, Oleksandr Syrskyi, found that a previous estimate that the country needed 5,00,000 recruits was wrong, Mr. Zelenskyy said. That is partly because troops serving in the rear can be sent to the front line, he said.

Mr. Zelenskyy said he was not ready to tell journalists how many new conscripts the Ukrainian Army will need.

Conscription has been a sensitive matter in Ukraine for many months amid a growing shortage of infantry on top of a severe ammunition shortfall that has handed Russia the battlefield initiative. Russia's own problems with manpower and planning have so far prevented it from taking full advantage of its edge.

Russian conscripts

But the Russian military on Wednesday said it has experienced a recent surge in enlistments, attributing it to public outrage over last month's terror attack on a Moscow concert hall that killed more than 140 people. About 16,000 people have signed up in the last 10 days, Russia's Defence Ministry said.

Sport

East Bengal punishes nine-man Kerala Blasters

ISL

Stan Rayan
KOCHI

East Bengal FC defeated a nine-man Kerala Blasters 4-2 on a night when things went horribly wrong for the home side in the ISL at the Nehru Stadium here on Wednesday.

Shortly after taking the lead midway through the first half through a goal from Fedor Cernych who beat the EBFC goalkeeper Prabhsukhan Singh smartly, the Blasters - who were playing their last match at home in the league phase – appeared to be in nice flow. But things changed dramatically towards the end of the opening session.

First, Jeakson Singh was sent off with a second yellow and moments later, KBFC conceded a penalty in added time which Saul Crespo converted for the equaliser.

Call me for goals: Saul Crespo was lethal, finding the net twice on the night. THULASI KAKKAT

The Spaniard added one more from the middle of the box in the 71st minute to give EBFC the lead. A few minutes later, the Blasters were down to nine men when defender Naocha Singh was sent off with a red card for head-butting C.K. Aman.

Ten minutes later, Daisuke Sakai's attempt to head away Naorem Mahesh's shot slipped into his own net.

With the playoff berth confirmed on Tuesday night, after Odisha FC beat Punjab, KBFC replaced ISL's leading scorer Dimitrios Diamantakos and Cernych early in the second half.

But the home side, which had beaten EBFC in their previous meeting in November, will be very unhappy with the way things went tonight.

The result: Kerala Blasters FC 2 (Fedor Cernych 24, Hijazi Maher 84-og) lost to East Bengal FC 4 (Saul Crespo 45+3-pen & 71, Naorem Mahesh 83 & 87).

LIVE TELECAST

ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 7.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 7.30 p.m.
LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 11.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 12 a.m. onwards (Friday)

Women boxers to train abroad

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Indian boxers Nikhat Zareen, Preeti Pawar, Parveen Hooda and Lovlina Borgohain will train in Turkey for the Paris Olympics after the Sports Ministry cleared the proposal under TOPS on Wednesday. The four along with two coaches and a physio will leave later this month.

Training camps

The ministry's Mission Olympic Cell also approved training camps in Russia for wrestlers Sujeet (65kg), Deepak Punia (86kg) and Naveen (74kg) along with their sparring partners to train ahead of the Asian Olympic Qualification Tournament.

Asian Games and Commonwealth Games medallist long-jumper Murali Sreeshankar's proposal for financial assistance for Diamond League competitions in Suzhou and Doha was also approved, as was table tennis player Manika Batra's request for participation in WTT Feeder in Croatia and World Mixed Doubles Olympic Qualification Event in the Czech Republic.

Getting ready: World champions Lovlina and Nikhat will prepare for the Paris Games in Turkey. PTI

Indian shooter Bhoweneesh Mendiratta will head to Italy to train with personal coach Daniele Di Spigno while shooters Anantjeet Singh Naruka, Raiza Dhillon and Rajeshwari Kumari and para shuttler Palak Kohli were added to the TOPS Core group.

VISA FORMALITIES

Mustafizur set to miss at least next two Super Kings matches

S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

CSK will not have the services of Mustafizur Rahman for at least the next two IPL matches after he flew back to Bangladesh to complete his US Visa formalities for the T20 World Cup. If Mustafizur manages to sort out his visa and get his passport back in time, he could return for at least four games in April.

OVER THE MOON

I've always dreamt of taking Kohli's wicket, says LSG's Siddharth

K. MURALI KUMAR

Lucknow Super Giants spinner M. Siddharth was over the moon to get the prize scalp of Royal Challengers Bengalurus' Virat Kohli in the IPL game in Bengaluru on Tuesday. "I've always dreamt of taking Kohli's wicket. You can ask anyone in this world — Kohli is the biggest wicket you can take. I'm very, very happy," Siddharth said.

HOME STRETCH

Suryakumar clears most fitness tests, set to take guard soon

EMMANUAL YOGINI

Suryakumar Yadav has cleared almost all the fitness tests at the National Cricket Academy and is close to playing his first IPL game of the season. Asked if he will be able to play Mumbai Indians' home game on April 7 against Delhi Capitals, a BCCI source said: "A clear picture will emerge after Thursday's tests."

MISSING OUT

Super Giants' Mavi ruled out of IPL 2024 owing to injury

S.S. KUMAR

Lucknow Super Giants pacer Shivam Mavi has been ruled out of this season's Indian Premier League after failing to recover from his rib injury. The 25-year-old, who last played competitive cricket in August 2023, missed the entire domestic season for Uttar Pradesh but did turn up for LSG's pre-season training.

Destructive Knight Riders batters make it a no contest

After Narine's fireworks, Raghuvanshi, Russell and Rinku play with gay abandon to help Kolkata rack up a huge score; Pant and Stubbs' cameos the bright spots as a shell-shocked Delhi capitulates

IPL-17

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
VISAKHAPATNAM

Sunil Narine top-scored with 85 (39b, 7x4, 7x6) as Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) took apart Delhi Capitals' (DC) bowling like cotton candy to post 272 for seven before going on to win by 106 runs at the Dr. YSR ACA-VDCA cricket stadium here on Wednesday.

Narine batted in stark contrast to his opening partner Phil Salt. With the nonchalance of, say, Deadpool or Han Solo, Narine swatted sixes and fours as if sadistically driving away mosquitoes.

On the other hand, Salt, one of the hardest hitters of the ball in modern cricket, clubbed the ball as hard as Thor would hammer anything.

While Salt hit two consecutive fours – a loft over covers and a slash past the short third man– in Ishant Sharma's first over, Narine hit three sixes and two fours in his second. He launched a six over long off, pulled one to the deep square leg boundary, and sliced one to the extra cover boundary. Thereafter, he punished every single bowler who bowled at him.

In full flow

The 18-year-old Angkrish Raghuvanshi, who had begun his innings with a pull and a punch beyond the point fielder for back-to-back fours off Anrich Nortje, was methodically violent.

He was Virat Kohli-like with his cover drive and pull to the deep midwicket boundary. Yet, as if in a fit of temper, he reverse-hit Rasikh Salam for six. He hit two more sixes off Sumit Kumar and Rasikh to the deep midwicket boundary.

For the rest of the innings, KKR was in a world of funhouse mirrors as Andre Russell and Rinku Singh burned the DC 'house of hope' down to cinders.

Poor start

In response, Capitals lost four wickets in the Power-Play itself.

However, skipper Rishabh Pant resolutely braved on as did Sisyphus with his seemingly daunting task of rolling a boulder up a hill.

Pant (55, 25b, 4x4, 5x6), who hit four fours and two sixes off a Venkatesh Iyer over, looked like he was carrying a niggle. Tristan Stubbs also came good for Delhi, scoring 54 off 32 balls which included four fours and two sixes each off spinners Varun Chakaravarthy and Narine.

SCOREBOARD

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS
Phil Salt c Stubbs b Nortje 18 *(12b, 4x4)*, Sunil Narine c Pant b Marsh 85 *(39b, 7x4, 7x6)*, Angkrish Raghuvanshi c Ishant b Nortje 54 *(27b, 5x4, 3x6)*, Andre Russell b Ishant 41 *(19b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Shreyas Iyer c Stubbs b Khaleel 18 *(11b, 2x6)*, Rinku Singh c Warner b Nortje 26 *(8b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Venkatesh Iyer (not out) 5 *(2b, 1x4)*, Ramandeep Singh c Shaw b Ishant 2 *(2b)*, Mitchell Starc (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-2, nb-1, w-15): 22; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 272.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-60 (Salt, 4.3 overs), 2-164 (Narine, 12.3), 3-176 (Raghuvanshi, 13.2), 4-232 (Shreyas, 17.2), 5-264 (Rinku, 18.6), 6-264 (Russell, 19.1), 7-266 (Ramandeep, 19.3).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Khaleel 4-0-43-1, Ishant 3-0-43-2, Nortje 4-0-59-3, Rasikh 3-0-47-0, Sumit 2-0-19-0, Axar 1-0-18-0, Marsh 3-0-37-1.

DELHI CAPITALS
David Warner b Starc 18 *(13b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Prithvi Shaw c Varun b Vaibhav 10 *(7b, 2x4)*, Mitchell Marsh c Ramandeep b Starc 0 *(2b)*, Abishek Porel (**Impact Player in place of Khaleel**) c Narine b Vaibhav 0 *(5b)*, Rishabh Pant c Shreyas b Varun 55 *(25b, 4x4, 5x6)*, Tristan Stubbs c Starc b Varun 54 *(32b, 4x4, 4x6)*, Axar Patel c sub (Pandey) b Varun 0 *(1b)*, Sumit Kumar c sub (Pandey) b Narine 7 *(6b, 1x6)*, Rasikh Salam c Salt b Vaibhav 1 *(5b)*, Anrich Nortje c Shreyas b Russell 4 *(6b)*, Ishant Sharma (not out) 1 *(3b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-6, nb-1, w-5): 16; Total (in 17.2 overs): 166.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-21 (Shaw, 1.5), 2-26 (Marsh, 2.5), 3-27 (Porel, 3.6), 4-33 (Warner, 4.3), 5-126 (Pant, 12.2), 6-126 (Axar, 12.3), 7-159 (Stubbs, 14.5), 8-159 (Sumit, 15.1), 9-161 (Rasikh, 16.1).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING
Starc 3-0-25-2, Vaibhav (**Impact Player in place of Raghuvanshi**) 4-0-27-3, Russell 1.2-0-14-1, Narine 4-0-29-1, Varun 4-0-33-3, Venkatesh 1-0-28-0.
Toss: KKR; **PoM:** Narine.
KKR won by 106 runs.

Next assignment

DC: April 7 vs **MI**
Mumbai, 3.30 p.m.

KKR: April 8 vs **CSK**
Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders	3	3	0	6	2.518
Rajasthan Royals	3	3	0	6	1.249
Chennai Super Kings	3	2	1	4	0.976
Lucknow Super Giants	3	2	1	4	0.483
Gujarat Titans	3	2	1	4	-0.738
Sunrisers Hyderabad	3	1	2	2	0.204
Punjab Kings	3	1	2	2	-0.337
Royal Challengers	4	1	3	2	-0.876
Delhi Capitals	4	1	3	2	-1.347
Mumbai Indians	3	0	3	0	-1.423

Swashbuckling: Narine went hammer and tongs at the Capitals bowlers. K.R. DEEPAK

I enjoy seeing Mayank bowl from 20 yards behind the stumps: Rahul

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

In the post-match press conference on Tuesday, Royal Challengers Bengaluru Impact Player Mahipal Lomror explained that the team's game plan to tackle Lucknow Super Giants fast bowler Mayank Yadav was to use his express pace to get boundaries.

But in order to execute this idea, you must first get bat on it. Cameron Green failed on this front, as Mayank cut through his tame defence to thud into off-stump. The delivery may have been well short of the 156.7kmph clocked by Mayank earlier in the game, but it was still much too quick for the Australian.

Futile exercise

And when they did get bat on it, it was a futile exercise. Glenn Maxwell and Rajat Patidar did not have enough time to adjust the feet and get over the bounce, and ended up awkwardly slicing it high.

Just two games into his IPL career, Mayank is the hottest property in Indian cricket. In an era where speedsters are required to showcase cutters and slow bouncers, Mayank's allure lies in raw firepower.

Flying high: There is already talk of putting the fiery Mayank on the flight to the USA and West Indies. K. MURALI KUMAR

There are already calls to include the 21-year-old in the Indian team for the ICC men's T20 World Cup 2024. It is tough to argue against this suggestion. A rocket delivery at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium will remain a rocket in the USA and West Indies. Pace like fire holds immeasurable value in both franchise and international cricket.

Mayank was on the LSG bench for IPL 2022, and missed the previous IPL season through injury. If he manages to play through IPL 2024 without a break, Mayank will prove that he is ready for international duty.

LSG captain K.L. Rahul noted that Mayank had "quietly and patiently waited for two seasons in the dugout".

"Mayank has worked hard to make his comeback. He knows that bowling 155kmph consistently is not easy. He is a thorough professional when it comes to looking after his body," Rahul added.

When he has the 'keeping gloves on to Mayank, Rahul wisely takes a few steps back. "I'm enjoying seeing him bowl from 20 yards behind the stumps. That is how far back I would like to be when he is bowling," Rahul said.

Efficient Titans run into inconsistent Kings

N. Sudarshan
AHMEDABAD

An upbeat Gujarat Titans will take on a worried Punjab Kings in an Indian Premier League match at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Thursday.

GT registered a morale-boosting seven-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in its previous match and recovered from the thrashing against Chennai Super Kings.

Dispiriting losses

PBKS, which started with a victory over Delhi Capitals, is coming off two dispiriting losses against Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Lucknow Super Giants.

The Shubman Gill-led home side has been meticulous and efficient without being spectacular. B. Sai Sudharsan has held the batting together, especially at the Modi Stadium where the pitches haven't necessarily been featherbeds.

The return to form of David Miller also augurs well as GT looks for a third straight home win.

Among bowlers, Rashid Khan, Mohit Sharma, R. Sai Kishore and Noor Ahmad have impressed. But the jury is still out on whether Umesh Yadav is an adequate-enough replacement for Mohammed Shami.

PBKS, on the other hand, desperately needs a victory. It could have had one if it had not frittered away the chance from a commanding position against LSG. Chasing 200, PBKS was 102 for no loss before being blinded by Mayank Yadav's searing pace.

Shikhar Dhawan, Prabhsimran Singh, Liam Livingstone and Sam Curran have been among the runs, but haven't fired collectively. Livingstone suffered a hamstring injury against LSG and his fitness will be assessed on match day.

Medium-pacer Harshal Patel has bled 137 runs from 12 overs while tweaker Rahul Chahar has blown hot and cold. Will the in-form Karnataka pacer Vidwath Kaverappa make his IPL bow or seasoned all-rounder Rishi Dhawan be trusted?

Sitting pretty: Sai Kishore takes a stroll around the stadium with the son of Vikram Solanki, GT's director of cricket, in tow. VIJAY SONEJI

Today's match

GUJARAT TITANS vs. PUNJAB KINGS

Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
PLAYED: 3
GT 2 | PBKS 1

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by six wickets, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

Team atmosphere at GT has helped me stay motivated: Mohit

The big curve: Mohit says he learnt quite a few lessons during the IPL last year. VIJAY SONEJI

N. Sudarshan
AHMEDABAD

From 2019 to 2021, Mohit Sharma played a grand total of two IPL games. In 2022, he travelled as a net bowler for Gujarat Titans.

For someone who held the Purple Cap in 2014 for Chennai Super Kings (23 wickets) and played two World Cups for India (2014 T20I & 2015 ODI), it would have been a tough experience.

But he showed his true worth last season when he claimed 27 wickets as GT nearly defended the IPL title it won in its inaugural year in 2022. And the 35-year-old has carried that form into this season – six wickets in three matches at an economy rate of 7.75.

Ahead of the game against PBKS, Mohit credited the atmosphere at GT for helping him stay motivated. "It depends on how your fellow players see you after a bad performance," Mohit said. "That decides whether you feel good or bad. In this team, over the last three years, if you have a bad performance, we don't talk about it. The rectification happens on the ground, not in the dressing room. That maintains confidence levels."

In that nerve-wracking 2023 final against CSK, Mohit almost defended 13 before conceding a six and a four off the last two balls. It left him heart-broken but there were learnings too.

"Not just that last over, I learnt a lot throughout the IPL last year," he said. "If you talk about just those two deliveries, I can say this – when you are under pressure, your subconscious mind dominates. That shouldn't happen and you have to follow your instinct. I learnt that aspect from those two balls."

INBRIEF

Sri Lanka routs Bangladesh by 192 runs, sweeps Test series

Sri Lanka thrashed Bangladesh by 192 runs in the second Test in Chittagong to sweep the two-match series 2-0 on Wednesday. Lahiru Kumara returned figures of four for 50, while Mehidy Hasan Miraz top-scored for the host with an unbeaten 81.

The scores: Sri Lanka 532 & 157/7 decl. bt Bangladesh 178 & 318 in 85 overs (Mominul Haque 50, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 81 n.o., Lahiru Kumara 4/50). *Sri Lanka win two-match series 2-0.*

Sumit Nagal loses in the pre-quarterfinals

Sumit Nagal lost 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 to fourth seed Lorenzo Sonego of Italy in the pre-quarterfinals of the €651,865 ATP tennis in Marrakech, Morocco, on Tuesday. Sumit got 25 ATP points and €10,165 for his effort.

Other results: €651,865 ATP, Marrakech: Doubles:
Pre-quarterfinals: Yuki Bhambri & Albano Olivetti bt Bart Stevens & Petros Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-4.
€74,825 Challenger, Barcelona: Doubles:
Pre-quarterfinals: Karol Drzewiecki & Szymon Walkow bt Sathi Reddy Chirala & Nick Hardt 6-1, 6-2.
$25,000 ITF women, Bujumbura, Burundi: First round: Jasmijn Gimbrere bt Riya Bhatia 6-1, 6-3; Ashmitha Easwaramurthi bt Abhilasha Bista 6-2, 6-4.
$25,000 ITF women, Hammamet, Tunisia: Doubles:
Pre-quarterfinals: Alice Pesci & Sameeksha Shroff bt Joyce Kim Behnke & Haina Franco 6-7(7), 6-2, [10-6].

Trying to get Archer ready for T20 WC, says Sussex coach

Jofra Archer is once again cranking up "exceptional pace" following a series of injury setbacks since 2019 and is on England selectors' radar for the T20 World Cup this year. Archer's County side Sussex's coach Paul Farbrace said the 29-year-old is bowling with the likes of England's Ollie Robinson and the West Indies' Jayden Seales in training and the plan is to make him ready for the showpiece event. "Last week, in practice, there was a spell where Oliver (Robinson) had bowled, Jayden bowled and then Jofra came into the middle and bowled – and he came marching out and bowled exceptionally quick," Farbrace was quoted by *The Telegraph* on Tuesday.

Arundhati, Sajana and Tamanna take South Zone to 289

Arundhati Reddy (85), Sajeevan Sajana (74) and Tamanna Nigam (55) took South to 289 in the first innings against West on the opening day of the senior women's inter zonal multi-day semifinal in Pune on Wednesday. In reply, West was nine for no loss at stumps. In another match, North produced a collective bowling effort to dismiss East for 132 in the first innings and then reached 99 for three after Shafali Verma stroked her way to an unbeaten 57 off 83 balls, studded with 10 fours.

The scores: East 132 in 71.4 overs vs North 99/3 in 28 overs (Shafali Verma 57 batting).
South 289 in 94.5 overs (Tamanna Nigam 55, Arundhati Reddy 85, Sajeevan Sanjana 74, Radha Yadav 4/72) vs West nine for one in 2.5 overs.

Vettel hints at return to F1 after talks with Mercedes boss

Four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel has suggested he could return to Formula One following talks with Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. Vettel won his four World titles with Red Bull from 2010-13. He retired from Formula One at the end of the 2022 season after six years at Ferrari and two with Aston Martin. "I am speaking to Toto. I don't know if that qualifies as Mercedes, but about other things," said Vettel on Wednesday.

Nakamura or Caruana are favourites, while no one in front among women

Among the four players who are competing for the first time are three Indians; the chess world is very excited to see how they will fare

CANDIDATES CHESS

Viswanathan Anand

Indian challengers: Praggnanandhaa has been working on increasing his risk-taking, Gukesh has a tactical style and therefore has more decisive results, Gujrathi's recent achievements show he has reached a new peak while Humpy and Vaishali will hope to make it count. FIDE

The Candidates tournament is always an eagerly anticipated one. All the world's best players compete fiercely to qualify to fight for the right to challenge the defending world champions – Ding Liren in the open section and Ju Wenjun in the women's section this time.

This year, in Toronto, both the men's and the women's Candidates events are being held simultaneously. Both are eight-player double-round robin events.

The men's field splits evenly into two groups. Four of the players have played in the candidates previously, while the other four are competing for the first time in this event.

Fabiano Caruana was the dominant player in 2023; he took unshared first place both in Bucharest and in St. Louis and has been impressive throughout.

Hikaru Nakamura also had a sensational year, though he does not play as much. He is ruthless in grabbing any opportunities that come his way. He demonstrated this by winning Norway Chess and qualifying in the Grand Swiss. Ian Nepomniachtchi hasn't fully recovered from his defeat in the world championship against Liren last year. His play since then has been fairly subdued. Alireza Firouzja is enormously talented and can be a danger to anyone, but both Ian and Alireza struggle with unpredictable form.

Since the Candidates tournament favours stability as much as ability, I lean towards Nakamura or Caruana as favourites.

Among the four players who are competing in the Candidates for the first time are three Indians. The chess world is very excited to see how they will fare. Their leap in strength in the last year and a half has been spectacular.

R. Praggnanandhaa has a classical dependable style but has recently been working hard on increasing his aggression and risk-taking.

D. Gukesh has an aggressive tactical style and therefore has more decisive results. He has shown a lot of maturity in dealing with setbacks and goings-on. His long journey to qualify for the candidates via the FIDE Circuit is a good example of this.

Vidit Gujrathi is the oldest of the Indian candidates. His recent achievements show that he has reached a new peak. He has gained in confidence but can be vulnerable when success is near (World Rapid and Tata Steel 24). Abasov is the clear underdog. He will be the one everyone tries to beat, and therein lies his opportunity as well.

All the newcomers will face tension and pressure that they are not accustomed to.

Amongst the women, six of them have experience at the highest levels, even though none of them has experience in this specific double-round robin format.

Tan Zhongyi was the World champion and the World rapid champion, while Lei Tingjie, Aleksandra Goryachkina, Kateryna Lagno, Anna Muzychuk, and Koneru Humpy have all been losing finalists in the World Championship.

Muzychuk and Lagno have been World Rapid and Blitz champions as well. Humpy won the World Rapid in 2019 and narrowly missed winning it again in 2023. She plays fewer events nowadays, but she is able to compete at the highest levels and keep her strength.

Goryachkina won the FIDE World Cup last year. From their performances, I am unable to pick a favourite amongst these six players. The two first-timers here are R. Vaishali and Nurgyul Salimova, who are also the two youngest participants.

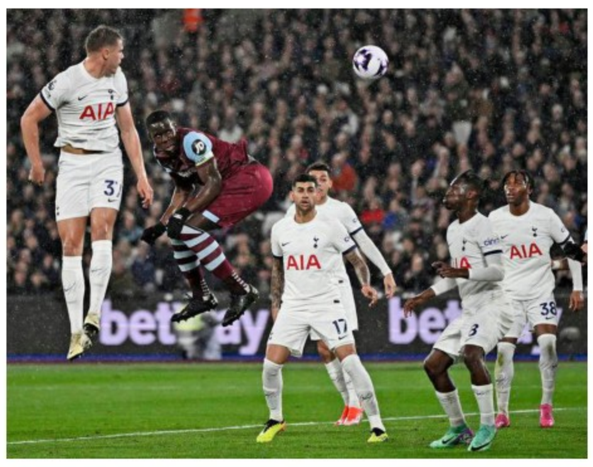
Vaishali won the Grand Swiss last year and achieved the title of Grandmaster as well, leaving only Salimova without that title in the Candidates. Just like their male counterparts, their excitement can compensate for their lack of experience.

Vaishali can enjoy a historic moment together with her brother Praggnanandhaa as the first brother-sister pair in the Candidates!

Honours even between Tottenham and West Ham

PREMIER LEAGUE

Associated Press
LONDON



Rising to the occasion: Zouma's goal in the 17th minute drew West Ham level. REUTERS

Tottenham missed the chance to overtake Aston Villa in the race for Champions League qualification after settling for a 1-1 draw at West Ham on Tuesday in the Premier League.

Brennan Johnson had given fifth-place Spurs an ideal start at London Stadium, but that was cancelled out by Kurt Zouma's leveller in the 19th.

West Ham could have won if Michail Antonio had been more ruthless with a second-half chance.

The forward raced through on goal after an hour, but with only Guglielmo Vicario to beat, he fired straight at the Spurs goalkeeper.

Spurs knew a big enough win would have seen it overtake fourth-place Villa on goal difference. And that looked like a possibility when the visitor raced into an early lead after Timo Werner burst past Vladimir Coufal and played in Johnson to convert from close range.

But manager Ange Postecoglou was left frustrated when Jarrod Bowen's corner was turned in by an unmarked Zouma.

The result left Tottenham two points behind Villa, having played the same number of games.

Newcastle's push for European football next season was also dented by Dominic Calvert-Lewin's late penalty as Everton fought back to earn a 1-1.

The home team went on to dominate for long periods, but two VAR calls in the second half proved decisive as Everton salvaged a valuable point in its fight to avoid relegation.

The results: Bournemouth 1 (Kluivert 79) bt Crystal Palace 0; Burnley 1 (Bruun Larsen 37) drew with Wolves 1 (Ait Nouri 45+3); Newcastle 1 (Isak 15) drew with Everton 1 (Calvert-Lewin 88-pen).

Nottingham Forest 3 (Hudson-Odoi 9, Wood 19, Gibbs-White 45+3) bt Fulham 1 (Adarabioyo 49); West Ham 1 (Zouma 19) drew with Tottenham 1 (Johnson 5).

India women to play T20I series in Bangladesh

Press Trust of India
DHAKA

The Indian women's cricket team will tour Bangladesh for a five-match T20I series from April 28 to May 9 in in Sylhet.

The first match will be a day-night affair and will be played on April 28, followed by games on April 30 (D/N), May 2, May 6 and May 9 (D/N).

Bracewell to lead NZ for Pakistan tour

Agence France-Presse
WELLINGTON

Michael Bracewell will captain New Zealand for the first time on its T20 tour of Pakistan this month, with a host of top names missing as it is playing in the Indian Premier League. Pakistan hosts New Zealand for five T20Is, starting in Rawalpindi on April 18.

IOC sets deadline of 'early 2025' to keep boxing in LA Olympics

Associated Press
LAUSANNE

The International Olympic Committee on Wednesday said it needs to find a suitable new international boxing body by early next year or else risk boxing dropping out of the Olympics for the Los Angeles Games in 2028. The IOC stripped the International Boxing Association of the right to run the Olympic boxing tournaments in Tokyo in 2021 and Paris this year.

On Tuesday, the Court of Arbitration for Sport upheld the IOC's decision to formally de-recognise the IBA, in effect cutting it out of the Olympic movement altogether.

The IOC has long cited concerns about IBA's governance and the integrity of how boxing matches are refereed and judged.

"Because of the universality and high social inclusivity of boxing, the IOC wants it to continue to feature on the program of the Olympic Games," the IOC said Wednesday.

"Unfortunately, this is far from certain for the Olympic Games LA 2028 because, for governance reasons, the IOC is not in a position to organise another Olympic boxing tournament. To keep boxing on the Olympic programme, the IOC needs a recognised and reliable International Federation as a partner."

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग खण्ड सूरतगढ़
दूरभाष: 01509-220069 ई-मेल xensog.pwd@rajasthan.gov.in
क्रमांक- 3965 दिनांक- 26.03.2024
निविदा संशोधन सूचना
NIB Code: PWD2324A5084
इस कार्यालय द्वारा पूर्व में जारी ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 12 वर्ष 2023-24 में निम्नलिखित संशोधन किया जाता है :-

स.क्र.	विवरण	पूर्व में नियत दिनांक	वर्तमान में संशोधित दिनांक
1.	ऑन-लाईन निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड एवं जमा करवाने की अंतिम दिनांक	दिनांक 02.04.2024 सायं 06.00 बजे तक	दिनांक 10.06.2024 सायं 06.00 बजे तक
2.	ऑन-लाईन निविदा खोलने की दिनांक	दिनांक 03.04.2024 को सायं 03.00 बजे।	दिनांक 11.06.2024 को सायं 03.00 बजे।

निविदा की शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।
कार्य के यू.बी.एन. नं. निम्नानुसार हैं :-
1. PWD2324WSOB22227 2. PWD2324WSOB22228
(गुरतेज सिंह)
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Short advertisement for recruitment of faculty position on direct recruitment.
No: IISERBPR/DOFA/2024/1 Dated :01.04.2024
Opening date for submission of application: 0900 hrs of 05.04.2024
Closing date of submission of application: 1700 hrs of 04.05.2024
Crucial date for calculation of age/qualification/experience: 04.05.2024
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Berhampur is a premier autonomous Institution of National Importance established by the Ministry of Education (MoE), Govt. of India (GoI) for promotion of high-quality science education and research in the country. IISER Berhampur was set up as the 7th IISER by Govt. of India in 2016 under NITSER Act, 2007.
The Institute invites applications through online from eligible candidates for the following positions: -
The details of the posts are as under:

S.No.	Position	Department	Vacancy with category	Area of Specialization
1	Professor	Biological Sciences	01 (UR)	Animal Physiology, Disease Biology
2	Professor #	Computer & Data Sciences	01 (OBC NCL)	Algorithms, Complexity, Science of Computer Programming, Data Sciences
3	Assistant Professor (Gr-I)	Physical Sciences	01 (OBC NCL)	Low temp experimental physics, Scanning Probe Technicues
4	Assistant Professor (Gr-I)	Earth and Environmental Sciences	01 (ST)	Hydrogeology, Environmental Geochemistry and Sustainability Science, Structural Geology, Economic Geology

 # In case of suitable candidates eligible for the post of Professor in the Department of Computer and Data Sciences will not be found suitable to be called for interview, then the post will be downgraded to Associate Professor. Therefore, the candidate who are fulfilling the eligibility criteria and interested may apply for the post of Associate Professor. Separate application for the post of Professor and Associate Professor are to be made.
Note: Horizontal reservation of prescribed 4% for PwBD candidates as per the relevant Act & instructions of the Govt. of India as applicable are to be made.
Note: Please visit Institute website www.iiserbpr.ac.in for submission of application and full text of the advertisement for all other details regarding educational qualification, experiences and other eligibility criteria. The detail advertisement as posted on our website will regulate the recruitment of the above posts.
Registrar

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Sporting Club goes top after win over Maharashtra Oranje

Sporting Club Bengaluru soared to the top of the I-League 2 table following a 2-0 away victory over Maharashtra Oranje FC on Wednesday. A goal each from Roshan Gigi and Thomyo Shimray helped the side rise up to 21 points from nine matches.
FC Bengaluru United, which had occupied first position until now, slipped to second after a 1-2 home defeat to Dempo SC. FCBU is two points off Sporting from an equivalent nine matches.
Five games are remaining and the top-two sides will be promoted to the I-League.
The results: Sporting Club Bengaluru 2 (Roshan Gigi 47, Thomyo Shimray 39) bt Maharashtra Oranje FC 0; FCBU 1 (Rishabh Dobriyal 59) lost to Dempo Sports Club 2 (Necio Fernandes 18, Rahul Paswan 31).

RWF runs riot

Rail Wheel Factory hammered SBM Jain University 8-0 in a KSHA Super division hockey league championship match at the KSHA hockey stadium.
The results: Falcon HC 3 (Vishwa 32, M Sunder Raj 35, Royan Rodrigues 37) bt Besant HC 'A' 1 (Prashanth 27); Rail Wheel Factory 8 (Kusha 2, Ranjith 13, 28, 46, 49, Asan 26, Chengappa 40, Sushil Xalxo 42) bt SBM Jain University 0.

Kodagu Colts posts win

Kodagu Colts defeated Blues FA 3-1 in a KSFA 'C' division football league outing here.
The results: KSFA 'C' division: Bangalore Super Strikers FC 1 (Sujith 28) bt Bangalore Champs FA 0; Kodagu Colts 3 (Ravikumar 18, 42, Shahim 48) bt Blues FA 1 (Avinash 53); Shubhodaya FC 3 (Rajesh Shankar 20, Sajjad Ali 43, Allan Davis 56) bt Noel Wilson FC 0.

Kaushik nets all four for Rovers FC

Kaushik Mani scored four goals to help Rovers FC defeat Indiranagar FC 4-1 in the BDFA 'C' division football league here.
The results: CIL FC 3 (R. Pradeep 26, 70, Chand Pasha 33) bt Tilak Memorials FC 1 (John Gilbert 45); Stride FC 2 (Abinash Das 14, 55) bt Royals FC 0; Postal Dept FC 2 (K. Rohan 41, Dhanush 45) drew with Veterans FC 2 (Y. Ranjith 4, R.C. Prakash 7); Rovers FC 4 (Kaushik Mani 13, 17, 21,26) bt Indiranagar FC 1 (Liansang John 34).